Volume 4

COMICS

THE GOLDEN AGE

NMP

EDITED BY RON GOULART

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CANADA

COMICS THE GOLDEN AGE

EDITED BY RON GOULART

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EDITOR'S PAGE

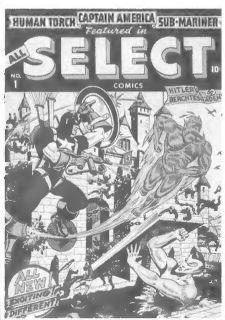
Now that we've been in business for a spell, we're starting to get responses from C:GA readers. Although I'm not quite ready to add a letters page, I do want to encourage everybody to keep those cards and letters coming. One reader in the Midwest wrote to say "I find myself thoroughly impressed," and then added, "the only brief criticism I would like to pass along is that the text material is rather lifeless." Since I'd written all the text material in the issue referred to, it was something of a struggle for me to remind myself of all I'd learned at Dale Carnegie's knee and take criticism with a smile. As I've mentioned in earlier issues, new contributors are always welcome and I try to add some each issue. Another chap writes that "the article on Jimmy Thompson was great..." and "I think the lower price will help a lot." We also heard from a Jack Cole fan who'd like to see even more stuff by his idol, including complete Silver Streak stories. Being a Cole buff myself, I have to curb my enthusiasm lest I overload the pages with his work. I imagine, though, that we'll have more of his art in future portfolios.

This issue we're trying something a mite different and devoting just about all our issue to a single theme. Namely, Timely Publications. Before Marvel there was Timely and in our special report we look at the early titles, the earliest Marvel characters and we even consider what the likes of Jack Kirby, Stan Lee and Mickey Spillane were up to back in the Golden Age.

In subsequent issues we'll be doing more special sections, covering other houses, such as Fawcett and DC, and star characters including Superman and the original Captain Marvel. Your suggestions for these specials are welcome.

THE TIMELY SPECIAL

Leading off our section on the comic books and characters that were the foundation of today's mighty Marvel empire is a look at the titles that Timely Publications put forth during the Golden Age. Everything from *Marvel Mystery* to *Joker Comics*, featuring characters as diverse as Sub-Mariner and Powerhouse Pepper. Next a rundown on Funnies, Inc., the art shop where many of Timely's most successful features were born. This issue's hero profile is devoted to that flaming foe of crime, the Human Torch, and our honored Second Banana is Timely's own Angel. There's also a survey of some of the weird adventures that befell Captain America in his heyday and a who's who devoted to Timely's forgotten artists.



COMING ATTRACTIONS

Because of the size of the Timely Special, some of our regular C:GA features got crowded out. Most'll be back nest time, including Jerry DeFuccio's column. Will Murray will be joining us with a piece on the comic book career of Walter Gibson and THE SHADOW. And there'll be a section on BATMAN, who's celebrating 45 slambang years in comics.

In 1939 Martin Goodman ventured into the comic book business. Taking his experience in pulps to heart he brought action and adventure to the four-colored page. His company was Timely... his first book Marvel Mystery Comics. One day that company would grow up to be an industry giant for Timely Publications became Marvel Comics Group. This is how it all began.

THE TIMELY TITLES

YOU NAZI RATS HAVE HAD YOUR FUN -- NOW TRY MY BRAND OF HUMOR!
YA-HOO!
CAP AND BUCKY HIT THE NAZIS LIKE A BROADSIDE FROM A LINE OF CANNONS! -- WITH THE SAME DEVASTATING RESULTS!

Sometime in the summer of 1939 Martin Goodman went into the comic book business. Up until then, under various company names, he'd been publishing a string of pulp fiction magazines. He did Western pulpwoods as well as such titles as *Dynamic Science Stories*, *Uncanny Tales* and *Marvel Science Stories*. When approached by the Funnies, Inc. shop, who were just getting into putting together comic magazines for publishers, Goodman was persuaded that the time was right to branch out. The result was *Marvel Mystery Comics*.

MARVEL

The first issue, with a somewhat murky painted cover by pulp vet Frank R. Paul, was called just plain *Marvel Comics* and Goodman called his company Timely Publications for this go-round. It seems to have gotten off to a faltering start, since some surviving copies are dated October, 1939 and others November. While everything Funnies, Inc. dreamed up for the premiere number wasn't first-rate, the shop did manage to include the Human Torch, Sub-Mariner, the Angel and Ka-Zar. With the second issue the title was expanded to *Marvel Mystery Comics*, though to most fans the magazine was always just *Marvel*.

In addition to the above mentioned quartet of durable characters there was a fluctuating lineup of second bananas. The Masked Raider, a roadshow Lone Ranger with a sidekick named Mexican Pete, survived for twelve issues; Electro, one of the most impressive robots in GA comics, clanked onto the scene in #4 and held on until #19; The Ferret, a private eye drawn by Irwin Hasen, solved five cases before oblivion caught up with him.

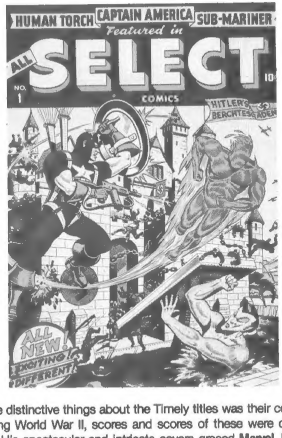
The life spans of the characters who came along in *Marvel*'s second year were healthier. Terry Vance, AKA the School Boy Sleuth, joined the crew with #10 and managed to hold on for years. The strip was written by Ray Gill and drawn by Bob Oksner. The Vision initially manifested himself in the thirteenth issue and stayed on for nearly three years. An early invention of Joe Simon and Jack Kirby, his skin matched his costume. Both were green. The Vision hailed from "the supernatural world" and always materialized out of smoke, which

somehow served as his gateway from another dimension. Once here the grim, greenfaced supernatural being tangled with werewolves (male and female), fake spiritualists, evil sorcerers, demented rainmakers and maneating trees. The Vision never smiled and he had no eyeballs. A staunch pessimist, he would end each caper with a gloomy soliloquy. Such as, "The world seethes with terror and evil! It is time for me to hurry where I am most needed!" All in all, not an easy guy to warm up to.

Another latecomer who thrived was the Patriot. After a tryout over in the *Human Torch* quarterly, he moved into *Marvel* in #21 (July, 1941). In everyday life he was a reporter named Jeff Mace and he had no superpowers. Donning a red, white and blue outfit that made him look something like a star-spangled Roman soldier, he went after spies and saboteurs. The first artist on the feature was George Mandel. The *Marvel* cast remained fairly stable after the advent of the Patriot. Jungleman Ka-Zar retired after #27 and was replaced by Jimmy Jupiter, a kid who had wonderland adventures that would've curled Alice's hair. Not until the arrival of Miss America late in 1943 was there any big change in the contents.

Beyond a doubt one of the things that contributed to the early success of *Marvel* was the battles and team-ups of Carl Burgos' Human Torch and Bill Everett's Sub-Mariner. Prince Namor, who'd first appeared in the extremely short-lived *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly*, had been raising hell from the moment he arrived in *Marvel*. Coming to Manhattan from his decimated undersea kingdom, Sub-Mariner is determined to get revenge. "You white devils have persecuted and tormented my people for years," he explains to policewoman Betty Dean, the pretty brunette with whom he carries on a love-hate relationship. Once in New York City Namor carries on in the manner of an earlier and larger visitor name of King Kong. "He was an angry character," reflected Everett some years later. "He was probably expressing some of my own personality." With the angry Namor cutting up in New York City and the Human Torch

THE SCHOMBURG TOUCH



One of the distinctive things about the Timely titles was their covers. And, especially during World War II, scores and scores of these were drawn by Alex Schomburg. His spectacular and intricate covers graced **Marvel**, **Human Torch**, **Sub-Mariner**, **All Select**, etc. In his late thirties when he began producing comic book covers, Schomburg was an expert at depicting Captain America, the Torch and Sub-Mariner, singly or as a team, in the most complex and improbable situations.

There was usually no single center of attention on one of his bright covers, they were more like three ring circuses. With Sub-Mariner pulling down a bridge and causing Nazi troops and tanks to go plummeting into a ravine in one corner, the Human Torch saving Bucky from being fed into a blast furnace in another corner and Cap parachuting down and blasting away at a dozen or so hooded Japanese spies with a tripod machine gun. You could browse through a Schomburg cover, savoring the weapons and infernal machines, the multiplicity of perils about to befall Toro, Bucky or some hapless damsel, the hordes of faithfully rendered Axis troops, the explosions and fireworks. The artist, with his bravura style, always convinced you that all the action and noise he crammed into a cover could actually be occuring at that single frozen instant of time. He was an expert at a sort of wild and woolly pageantry and his covers were perfect packaging for the Timely titles.

Although best remembered for his **Marvel** stint, Schomburg also turned out covers for **Green Hornet**, **Speed Comics**, **Exciting**, **Black Terror**, etc. He never worked directly for Goodman in the Timely offices. "I had my own small studio over on Eighth Avenue and 44th Street," he once explained. "In that manner I was able to do work for the competition such as Ned Pines' Standard Magazines, for whom I signed the art Xela." He usually had a free hand. "I seldom submitted pencil roughts, they bought sight unseen, just as long as the Japs showed their ugly teeth and glasses and the Nazis looked like bums." A cover usually took a week to do and the average pay was $40 each.

freshly arrived in the Apple to work as a cop, a confrontation was inevitable. "That was an idea Carl and I dreamed up," Everett once told Jim Steranko. "We considered the fact that the two characters and their opposing elements had separate stories and wondered what would happen if we got them together as rivals to fight each other." What happened was a battle royal that raged through Marvel #8 and #9 before winding up in a standoff in #10.

There were two rounds in #8, a ten-page Sub-Mariner chapter and then twelve pages of the Human Torch. Things really heated up in the next issue, with the cover copy proclaiming, "The city was rapidly being wrecked as the SUB-MARINER ran wild. Could the HUMAN TORCH stop this mad destruction? Read this Amazing Battle of Two Super Humans!" Inside you got another twenty-two pages of "sizzling blazing action!" The two fought on land, sea and in the air (at one point Namor knocks the Human Torch off the torch of the Statue of Liberty), trading punches and insults. Namor calls the Torch "fire bug", the Torch retorts with "You big fish!". And so it goes until Betty Dean is able to arrange a truce.

When next these representatives of fire and water met they were "fighting side by side!" As a caption in the twenty-six page teamup saga in Marvel #17 (March, 1941) explained, "The Human Torch and the Sub-Mariner are together again. Not to destroy each other but to form an alliance that will stop the gigantic plans for an invasion of these United States!"

Unlike some of its more sedate competitors, *Marvel Mystery Comics* was packaged very much like a pulp magazine, with plenty of hard sell on the covers. Red and yellow, the two best-selling colors, were prominently featured and there was always plenty of socko copy as well. Every issue featured a boldface teaser line accompanying the slambang illustration—*Could the SUB-MARINER Hold Off the Nazi Hordes Till Help Arrived? Only THE TORCH Could Save TORO From His Certain Doom!* Covers were even used to plug other Timely books. *Marvel #17*, for example, showcases a small reproduction of *Human Torch #2* in the lower right hand corner.

DARING

Timely's second title was *Daring Mystery Comics*, which came along late in 1939. Not destined for success, *Daring* tottered along and only managed to come out eight times in two years. In its short, ailing life the magazine introduced over three dozen characters and not one of them achieved anything approaching success. *Daring* was Timely's minor league, where aspiring heroes and heroines tried out. Apparently Joe Simon, prior to going into partnership with Jack Kirby, was at least partially responsible for putting the early issues together. Material came from Funnies, Inc., from the Harry "A" Chesler shop and possible over the transom.

Simon himself wrote and drew the Fiery Mask, the only superhero on hand in the first issue. The rest of the gang included the Texas Kid, Monako Prince of Magic and Flash Foster at Midwestern. With the second issue came an entirely different bunch of uninspired characters—the Laughing Mask, the Phantom Bullet, Zephyr Jones and his Rocket Ship, Trojak the

AND SO, THE BLACK WIDOW IS BOUND TO TAKE YOUR EVIL, MERCILESS SOUL TO THE PLACE IT BELONGS--ARE YOU READY?
NO, NO! KEEP AWAY FROM ME! DON'T! DON'T!
LEWIS--I WANT TO CHECK WITH YOU ON--WHY, WHAT'S HAPPENING? WHO?
AT THAT MOMENT, BYKER OPENS THE DOOR AND SEES--
LEWIS--COME!
THE BLACK WIDOW'S TOUCH OF DEATH!
UGH!
OUTSIDE THE ROOM
IT'S THE BLACK WIDOW! SHE'S GOT LEWIS AND NOW SHE'S AFTER ME!

Tigerman, etc. And so it went, with heroes checking in and out of the pages of *Daring* as though it were a motel.

Things perked up a bit with #6 (September, 1940). Simon and Kirby contributed Marvel Boy, featuring young Martin Burns who is the reincarnation of Hercules. As the god Jupiter explains when he calls on the moderately astonished blond youth to tell him he's got to dress up in a tricksuit and go fight spies and saboteurs, "You are a mere boy, Martin, apparently innocent and harmless. You shall cause the downfall and destruction of men who hold power over millions, who despite every resource at their command shall meet defeat by your hands... you shall be the marvel of your age... the boy with the strength of twenty men—THE MARVEL BOY." Decked out in a blue costume and crimson cape, Marvel Boy goes out and wipes out a nest of spies. Being a teenager, though, he has special problems that older superheroes don't and fighting Uncle Sam's enemies causes him to be tardy at school. MB lasted just one issue before flunking out, as did the Flying Flame, a strip named after an airplane, and Tigerman, about a jungle youth who palled around with a tiger.

After a lapse of eight months the seventh issue arrived on the nation's newsstands. Mostly the work of Funnies, Inc., it offered more new characters and was a definite improvement on what had gone before. Leading off the issue was the Thunderer by Carl Burgos and John Compton, the same duo producing the Human Torch. Bill Everett did the Fin, another of his aquatic efforts, and Jack Kirby was represented by a science fiction strip titled Captain Daring. Rounding out the issue were Blue Diamond, the Silver Scorpion and the Challenger. Not a bad package at all. It's difficult to tell what went wrong, but something must've. *Daring #8* didn't appear until nine more months had passed.

The cover was by Jack Kirby and showed five of the book's heroes running right at the reader. Citizen V, a masked man in a paramilitary outfit who fought for freedom in occupied Europe, replaced the Challenger. The rest of the cast remained the same. *Daring* turned into *Comedy Comics* with #9 (April, 1942) and the Fin, the Silver Scorpion and Citizen V made their farewell appearances there among the new funny characters. In the summer of 1944 the *Daring* title was resurrected, but only tried and true Timely heroes including the Torch, Sub-Mariner and the Destroyer were featured.

MYSTIC

Timely's next try was *Mystic Comics*, which debuted early in 1940 and took nearly two and a half years to reach its tenth issue. A flop of the same magnitude as *Daring*, much of the contents of its first three issues seem to have come from the dregs of the Chesler shop. Among the non-winners were Blue Blaze, who was almost a dead ringer for Fox' Blue Beetle, Dynamic Man, who was anything but, Flexo the Rubber Man, Dakor the Magician and Zephyr Jones again. Nothing better illustrates Timely's desperation and, possibly, lack of understanding of the expanding comic book market than the sheer godawfulness of everything in these issues. That Harry "A" Chesler could sell this stuff at all puts him in a class with Barnum.

Timely seemed to have turned to Funnies, Inc. for the contents of the fourth issue and the overall look of the magazine improved. Harry Sahle introduced his scary Black Widow. A murdered medium, she works for Satan himself and collects the souls of evildoers. For this same number Klaus Nordling, best-known for his work on

The DESTROYER
ONLY THE MIGHTY DESTROYER STOOD BETWEEN THE FIENDISH NAZI HORDES AND THEIR TERRIBLE PLAN FOR WORLD CONQUEST! AND ONLY THE DESTROYER DARED TO CHALLENGE THE ENTIRE ARMED MIGHT OF THE MURDEROUS NAZI MILITARY MACHINE! BUT COULD EVEN THE POWERFUL DESTROYER SURVIVE THE DEADLY THRUSTS OF THE NAZI KILLER, HERR SIN OR IS HE DOOMED TO PERISH BY HERR SIN'S TERRIFYING CREATION - THE MACHINE OF DEATH!!
A LOUD EXPLOSION TEARS THRU THE NIGHT AIR IN A FIELD IN NAZI GERMANY...
BOOM
WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARS, THREE FIGURES INSPECT THE WRECKAGE...
ACH! HERR SIN, YOUR DEATH MACHINE IS SCOT-VERY GOOT!
An AVISON & STAN LEE Feature Thriller-

ADVENTURES OF
KA-ZAR
THE GREAT
SINGLE-HANDED, KA-ZAR HAS DESTROYED A ROWDELL NAZI AND BASEST BASE IN HIS AFRICAN JUNGLE DOMAIN!
ON A CONQUERED PLANE, HE IS WINDING HIS WAY BACK OVER THE DENSE CONGO FOREST...

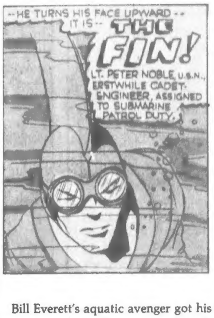
Lady Luck, invented his one and only superhero. While in the Himalayas the Thin Man learns how to make himself... well, thin. So thin that when he wants to sneak into a criminal lair he can slip between the gate bars and then through a window that's only open an inch or so. This unusual goodguy appeared but once.

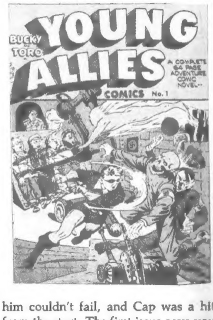
More new characters, again supplied by Funnies, Inc., were to be found in *Mystic* #5. Leading off the issue was the Black Marvel, billed as the "most sensational character in action-picture magazines." What he really was was just one more crimefighter in a costume. His only distinguishing feature was the fact he'd become a hero after wandering into an Indian camp and being trained by them. The Indians are referred to as the Blackfeet since the script writer apparently assumed that if two members of the Blackfoot tribe got together they became plural. This origin story was nicely drawn by George Mandel in his Caniff-inspired style. Paul Gustavson was represented by Super Slave and Bob Davis, calling himself Mister X, did the Blazing Skull. This last dealt with a costumed hero who operated in wartorn Europe. A newcomer named Syd Shores drew the Terror, about a fellow with Jekyll-Hyde ability. Fred Guardineer offered the Moon-Man. For some reason this story, dealing with racketeers who sell tainted meat to orphanages, is nearly identical in copy and layout to the first adventure of Mart Bailey's the Face that had appeared in *Big Shot Comics* a few months earlier.

Mystic was looking better, yet it was not hitting the stands with anything approaching regularity. Number 6 took seven months to show up. A new hero was added and given an unprecidented thirty pages in which to establish himself. He was the Destroyer, another hero operating in Europe. "A mighty avenging figure... who has sworn not to rest until he has destroyed the Nazi hordes." His costume featured red and blue striped tights, a grey tunic with a skull on it, a scarlet cowl and a bluish face mask that made him look like a cousin of the Vision. The introductory adventure is credited to Jack Binder, and was probably a product of his shop. With the next *Mystic* a young fellow who'd been doing odd jobs around his uncle's comic book company and writing filler stories and scripts was given a writer credit on the Destroyer. As a possible portent of what was to come the copy didn't read simply "by Stan Lee," but "An Al Avison & Stan Lee Feature Thriller."

With a few more cast changes, *Mystic* limped along until the summer of 1942 and its tenth issue. There was a four issue return in '44-45, starring the

Destroyer and such Timely standbys as the Angel and the Human Torch.





A FEW HEADLINERS

The next Timely title holds the record for lack of longevity. *Red Raven Comics* survived for just one issue. Simon and Kirby supposedly collaborated on this one, but only Kirby's artwork is evident. In addition to the cover he drew an eight page mythology-based strip called Mercury and seven pages about science fiction hero Comet Pierce. The dippy Red Raven yarn, about a fellow who's raised by kindly birdmen, is sometimes credited to Simon but the actual artist is Louis Cazeneuve. Dick Briefer perpetrated the Human Top, dealing with a superhero who has the dubious ability to spin around and around real fast.

The Human Torch was the first of Timely's sparse stable of winners to branch out into a magazine of his own. Dated Fall, 1940, the new quarterly offered a nineteen page adventure of the fiery crimefighter that introduced Toro, the "Flaming Torch Kid". The Sub-Mariner was aboard in a twelve page episode and the rest of the issue was filled with typical also-rans—Mantor the Magician, the Fiery Mask (whose mask wasn't fiery in this particular story), the Falcon and Microman (who was actually a boy). Subsequent issues ditched just about everybody but the Sub-Mariner and gave most of the space to the Torch and his boy sidekick. In its original incarnation the magazine held on until early 1949.

Bill Everett's aquatic avenger got his own quarterly in the spring of 1941. Sub-Mariner filled up forty pages, the Angel took twenty to deal with the House of Horror ("All who ventured past its gates have died... or have returned... RAVING MAD!"). Everett had help on his two stories and George Mandel looks to have done most of the penciling. Everett drew the second issue, Mike Roy the third and then a variety of artists spelled Everett. The title folded, for awhile, in 1949.

Up until the advent of Captain America early in 1941, characters who got whole comic books of their own had first had a successful tryout elsewhere—Superman in *Action Comics*, Batman in *Detective*, Captain Marvel in *Whiz*, the Torch and Subby in *Marvel*. Cap was the exception, cooked up for Timely by the recently formed team of Joe Simon and Jack Kirby, and introduced to the world in *Captain America Comics*. "Captain America was created for a time that needed noble figures," Kirby recalled recently. "We weren't at war yet, but everyone knew it was coming. That's why Captain America was born; America needed a superpatriot." As to their hero's appearance—"Drape the flag on anything and it looks good. We gave him a chainmail shirt and a shield, like a modern-day crusader. The wings on his helmet were from Mercury... He symbolized the American dream." Obviously a superhero with that much going for him couldn't fail, and Cap was a hit from the start. The first issue gave you not only his origin but introduced Bucky his boy companion.

Kirby had a good deal of help with the art chores, from Al Avison, Al Gabriele, Charles Nicholas, Syd Shores and even Reed Crandall. The innovative splash panels, often stretching across two pages, were almost always Kirby's work. "Movies were what I knew best," Kirby has said, "and I wanted to tell stories the way they do." When Simon and Kirby moved to DC, the Captain and Bucky were taken over by Avison and Gabriele, Shores and, eventually, a host of others. Besides his own magazine, Cap appeared in quite a few other Timely titles, as we'll see below.

U.S.A.

A few months after Cap another patriotic title came forth. *U.S.A. Comics* was equipped with two star-spangled heroes—the Defender and Mr. Liberty. Depicted on the cover by Kirby, the Defender was drawn on the inside by Nicholas. He came equipped with a Bucky-like costumed pal named Rusty and was described as being "strong, fearless and just." He lasted four issues. Mr. Liberty was promoted to Major Liberty in the second issue and vanished after the fourth. Drawn by Syd Shores, his costume was a beefed up version of a Colonial patriot's outfit and he was aided in his

THE SOUND OF A ROARING MOTOR ATTRACTS THE ATTENTION OF THE CRIME-BUSTERS!
HE'S GOT HIS STOP HAUL BUCKY!
CAP! THE RHINO! HE'S GETTING AWAY!
THERE HE GOES! CAP! CAN YOU...
CRASH! CRASH!
THE HEADBEAT'S ROAR GROWS FAINTER AT THE RHINO SPEEDS AWAY!
HERE'S ANOTHER RAMPAGING BEAST TO CAPTURE!

fight against 1940s spies and saboteurs by such bygone American heroes as Paul Revere and Ethan Allen.

Basil Wolverton, the nonpareil of comics, played it relatively straight with Rockman, Underground Secret Agent. When he wasn't battling surface subversives, Rockman lived "far beneath the surface of the North American continent," and was "leader of the inhabitants of Abysmia, a strange unknown, subterranean world." *U.S.A.* also introduced one of the great goofy second bananas of all time, Whizzer. Although he dressed like your everyday superguy and zipped around in a fair imitation of the Flash, Whizzer had an origin that caused him to stand out from his peers. Dying "deep in the jungles of Africa," Bob Frank is given a transfusion of the blood of a "lightning-fast mongoose." Recovering, he discovers he's now incredibly speedy. "And if I'm as fast as a mongoose, I'm faster than any human being in the world." Returning to New York, Bob "chooses a distinctive costume to clothe himself in" and becomes the Whizzer.

Rounding out the initial issue were Jack Frost, a chilling fellow, and the Young Avenger, "a youth with the strength of Hercules, the courage of a lion and the heart of a fighter." Because this feature was signed Michael Robard, it's been credited to the above-mentioned Mike Roy. The actual artist, though, is the young Howard Purcell. *U.S.A.*'s lineup fluctuated during its five year run. Captain Terror, the Vagabond and the Victory Boys came and went. Characters from other titles dropped in—the Black Widow, Marvel Boy, the Destroyer. From #6 on Captain America took up residence as the star of the magazine.

YOUNG ALLIES AND ALL WINNERS

By mixing a little of the Justice Society with the Dead End Kids format, Timely got the Young Allies. The first issue of their quarterly was published in the summer of 1941 with Joe Simon listed as Art Editor and Jack Kirby as Art Director. Despite these credits, the team had little to do with the actual drawing of the fifty some page novel. Charles Nicholas, aided by the likes of Al Avison, did most of the work. The story was Bucky and Toro teaming up with three everyday kids —Knuckles, "formerly a dead-end kid", Tubby and Whitewash ("Yeah man! I is also good on de watermelon!"). They join forces with a British agent, tangle with the formidable Red Skull and even have a brush with Hitler in Berlin. At the conclusion, after Cap and the Torch have lent a hand, readers were asked, "Do you want to see more of the Young Allies?" The response must've been favorable, since the "small band of daring kids" went on to appear in twenty issues of their own magazine as well as *Kid Komix*, *Amazing*, *Mystic* and *Marvel*.

The Timely answer to DC's *All-Star* also made its appearance in that summer of '41. Titled *All Winners Comics*, it had to fudge some to come up with five heroes who could be labeled winners. Undoubtedly the Human Torch, Sub-Mariner and Captain America were front runners, but the Angel was a second ranker and the Black Marvel was only known to the happy few who'd happened to notice him in the sporadically printed issues of *Mystic*. He was replaced in the second issue by the Whizzer, the fellow who'd had the mongoose blood transfusion, and the Destroyer. Not until 1946 did Timely get around to imitating the Justice Society with a group known as the All Winners Squad. Consisting of the Torch, Sub-Mariner, Cap, the Whizzer and Miss America, the Squad had two book length adventures, in #19 and #21. In line with the timely policy of keeping readers off balance, there was no *All Winners #20*.

THE FUNNY SIDE

The Goodman company ventured into humor just after the United States entered the Second World War and in 1942 launched *Joker Comics*, *Comedy Comics*, *Terry-Toon Comics* and *Krazy Komics*. Headlining *Joker* was Basil Wolverton's Powerhouse Pepper, surely one of the wackiest heroic sagas ever concocted. In addition to the baldheaded superhero you got Squat Car Squad. Al Jaffee's screwball police procedural epic, Snoopy and Dr. Nutzy, a detective burlesque, Tessie the Typist, a working girl saga, and an assortment of other funny fillers. *Comedy* had been, as mentioned earlier, a superhero magazine before changing its name. Thus in its earliest issues you still found characters such as the Fin and the Silver Scorpion rubbing shoulders with the Comedy Kids and the Li'l Professor & Rudy the Robot. My favorite character in these transition numbers was Stuporman by a fellow named Harry Douglas. Douglas wrote like a cross between Wolverton and Bill "Smokey Stover" Holman and drew like a gifted ten-year-old.

Terry-Toons and *Krazy* offered funny animals, in the former adapted from Paul Terry's lacklustre animated cartoons and in the latter brand new stuff. The best feature in *Krazy* was Jaffee's Silly Seal and Ziggy Pig.

After World War II interest in superheroes waned and by the end of the 1940s the Timely adventure titles were gone. The company didn't exactly go out of the hero business forever, but later developments are beyond the scope of this piece.

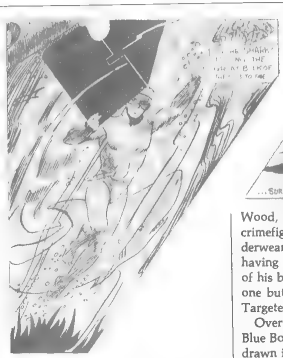
FUNNIES inc.

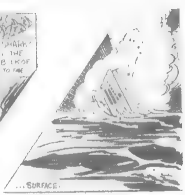
Late in 1939, operating out of a small loft office in midtown Manhattan, a handful of artists and writers got together the first issue of *Marvel* and, as we've already seen, created the foundation for today's vast Marvel empire. Using the business-like name of Funnies, Inc., the art and editorial service went on to turn out work for several other Timely publications as well as such Golden Age comics as *Target*, *Blue Bolt*, *Heroic*, *Classic Comics* and *True Comics*. No history of Timely could be complete without an account of the Funnies shop.

It was founded by Lloyd Jacquet, who was neither an artist nor a writer, in 1939. Described once as a man who "dressed like a head waiter in a French restaurant and was very mannerly," Jacquet had worked with Major Malcolm Wheeler-Nicholson on *New Fun Comics* and then gone on to edit the Centaur line—*Funny Picture Stories*, *Keen Detective Funnies*, *Amazing-Man*, etc. Deciding there was more money to be made in packaging comic books than editing them, Jacquet set up shop as Funnies, Inc. By 1939 the comic book business had demonstrated, chiefly because of the advent of Superman the year before, that big profits were to be made. More and more publishers were contemplating jumping on the four color bandwagon and that meant they'd need material to fill their sixty-four page issues. Funnies, Inc., following in the footsteps of shops started by Harry "A" Chesler and the team of Jerry Iger and Will Eisner, intended to help fill that need.

For his initial crew Jacquet recruited people who'd worked with him at Centaur, such as Carl Burgos and Bill Everett. Some years later, in recalling the start of Funnies, Inc., Everett said, "Lloyd offered me and a fellow by the name of Max Neill a chance to go in with him and two other guys, John Mahon and Frank Torpey, on a fifty-fifty basis. We took a small loft office on 45th Street, and started an art service." In an interview with Roy Thomas Everett gave some specifics of his chores. "It got to the point where there was so much editorial work and so many corrections to be done that someone had to be in charge of it, and I was made (in name at least) the Art Director....I had to assign and edit all the artwork."

Apparently, unlike the competing Chesler and Eisner-Iger shops, most of the Funnies, Inc. gang didn't do their work on the premises. They just came in to drop off stuff and pick up new assignments. Among those Art Director Everett dealt with were such artists as Bob Wood, Harry Sahle, George





Mandel, Irwin Hasen, Paul Gustavson, Sam Gilman and Bob Davis. The writers included John Compton, Ray Gill, Kermit Jaediker and Mickey Spillane. Everett, in the Thomas interview, had rather negative memories of the man who went on to become just about the most financially successful mystery writer in America. "Mickey and I became very friendly enemies because I had to edit his stuff in the '40s. I had to edit the stuff and I couldn't buy it. And, of course, he was a pretty arrogant little guy. He couldn't understand why his stuff wasn't the greatest in the world. Well, it was great, but it wasn't printable."

After the Timely titles, *Marvel Mystery* in particular, the Jacquet shop's most impressive job was the two magazines they put together for Novelty Press. For this funny book division of the powerful Curtis company, that also published the *Saturday Evening Post*, Funnies, Inc. created *Target Comics* and *Blue Bolt*. Both titles hit the stands in 1940. *Target* offered Burgos' White Streak (who can be sampled in this issue's GA Portfolio), T-Men, Lucky Byrd, Flying Cadet, Everett's Bull's-Eye Bill and eventually the Chameleon (also to be found in the Portfolio) and Spacehawk by Basil Wolverton. It wasn't until the tenth issue that a hero named the Target came along. Drawn by Bob Wood, the strip featured a costumed crimefighter who wore bulletproof underwear and could therefore risk having a bull's eye target on the front of his bright yellow tunic. He had not one but two sidekicks, known as the Targeteers.

Over in *Blue Bolt* a superhero called Blue Bolt was onboard from issue one, drawn initially by Joe Simon and then by Simon and Jack Kirby. The eventual star of the magazine was blond, cleancut Dick Cole, Wonder Boy. Although long forgotten, there was a big Torch—Sub-Mariner type battle staged in Blue Bolt, too. Stretching over several issues, it involved Dick Cole and a rival, evil-oriented wunderkind. Dick a cadet at prestigious Farr Military Academy, had been turned into a wonder boy by kindly Professor Blair. While that had been going on, over in Vienna "a quack, calling himself Herr Doktor Karno, had the self-same thought!" To make sure his wonder boy turned out nasty, Karno got hold of an orphan, both of whose parents were convicted murderers. As the boy, named Simba Karno, grew up he, quite naturally, developed feelings of jealousy over the good press his opposite was continually getting. When he finally reaches America and enrolls at Farr, a tremendous confrontation takes place. It lasts for months, until Simba realizes the error of his ways and, with the help of brain surgery, becomes a good guy and Dick's staunch pal. The Cole yarns were written and drawn by Bob Davis and several of the covers touting the fracas within were done by Everett in his most flamboyant manner. "Dick Cole BATTLES His Double!" proclaimed boldface type on the first one.

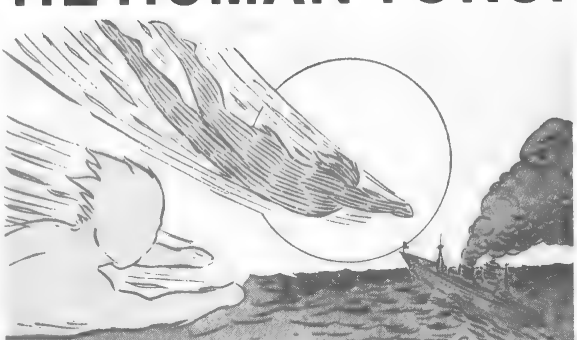
Jacquet's shop also provided artwork for Heroic Comics, including one of Everett's other aquatic heroes, Hydroman, and Tarpe Mills' Purple Zombie. *Daredevil Battles Hitler*, which became just plain *Daredevil* with the second issue, was also the handiwork of Funnies, Inc. Everett, George Mandel and Bob Davis were among those who contributed to what was, possibly, the most ambitious battle issue of the period. The shop packaged some of the more sedate magazines of the 1940s as well—*Parents'* well-intentioned but dull *True Comics* and every school kid's favorite crib, *Classic Comics*. These last two projects apparently didn't pay as well as some of the others and Jacquet used his lesser artists, for the most part, on them.

As the Forties progressed, considerable work was done for Fawcett. The prolific Carl Pfeufer was especially active for Captain Marvel's home company, turning out Don Winslow, Tom Mix, Hopalong Cassidy and quite a few others. The Jacquet shop, as noted previously, continued to provide work for Marvel even while Jacquet himself was in the service. By the middle of the decade the markets were less impressive—*Key Comics*, *Yellowjacket*, *Blue Circle*, etc. The shop stayed in business throughout the 1950s, but its days of glory were over.

HERO ★★ PROFILE

If the Golden Age of Comics had anything it was heroes. Big heroes, business suited heroes and colorfully costumed heroes of every shape and coloration. This feature profiles one of the stars of the 1940s every issue.

THE HUMAN TORCH



He wasn't human actually. He was a "synthetic man—an exact replica of a human being." For an android he did very well and, even though his adventures were neither the best written nor the best drawn of the Golden Age, he was just about the most popular and successful character Timely had in the 1940s. Only Captain America and Sub-Mariner offered any real competition.

The Human Torch's origin story is not one of the most coherent in the annals of superheroes, but the basic facts can be gleaned from the first issue of *Marvel*. It seems Professor Horton has been working at creating a synthetic human and he holds a press conference to announce that although he's succeeded he has some trepidations. "I call him THE HUMAN TORCH," Horton explains as he unveils a large airtight glass cylinder that contains his blond, redsuited creation. "Something went wrong with my figuring somewhere—every time the robot... contacts oxygen in the air, he bursts into flame!" Sure enough as Horton allows air into the glass cage, the Torch takes fire. Rather than tell the whitehaired prof that he should've expected somebody he dubbed the Human Torch to burst into flame now and then, the reporters say things like, "Destroy that man!"

Although Horton does try to incapacitate his android by burying him in cement, that doesn't work and before very long "the HUMAN TORCH is on the loose again!" The Torch gets mixed up, aptly enough, with ar-

THE TUNNEL IS RIPPED OPEN! A HEAVY FLOOD OF MUD AND WATER BURSTS THRU THE GAPING HOLE!
THIS HAS GOT TO STOP THE FLOOD!
THE BLAZING FIRE-BALL GROWS LARGER UNTIL THE ENTIRE HOLE IS COVERED!
THE MUD IS DRYING! NOTHING IS COMING THRU!
THE BALL BAKED THE MUD! IT'S AS HARD AS ROCK NOW! THE TUNNEL IS SAFE!
AT THAT MOMENT CROWLEY EMBROES ON THE NEW YORK SIDE OF THE TUBE!
LOOK, PRINCE ITOR! IT'S CROWLEY! HE'S ON THE RUNNING BOARD!
THEN NALDA'S GUESS WAS RIGHT! STOP HIM! HE HAS THE IDOL!

sonists and cleans up their dirty racket. By the end of the yarn he's learned to melt iron bars, throw fireballs and turn his flame on and off at will. When the old professor suggests they might be able to make a fortune, the now altruistic Torch informs his creator, "No, Horton, I'll be free and no one will ever use me for selfish gain—or crime!"

What you have jumbled together in this account are bits from the horror movies of the 1930s—most notably *Frankenstein* and *The Invisible Man*—plus stuff from the pulp hero stories. Only a scattering of true comic book supermen had come into being at this early date and the props and mythology had to be borrowed not only from other comic books but from outside sources as well. The early Human Torch behaves like both a Universal monster movie character on the rampage and a dime novel do-gooder. As the saga progressed he got his act together.

In the first issue of the *Human Torch* quarterly the late Carl Burgos gave a fanciful account of how he came to cook up the Torch, claiming the whole notion came to him in a sort of hallucinatory dream. "It was on the Fourth of July last year, a beastly hot day. The heat moved across my drawing board in heavy waves, so thick I could feel it. To make matters worse, I had just had a hot discussion with my publisher. He wanted a new character, something brand new, an angle that had never been done before. I was all hot and bothered. I racked my brain until my head began to swim. At my wit's end, I decided to lie down for awhile and try to cool off." After dreaming of furnaces and hot coals, Burgos turned into a skyrocket and while still glowing visited his publisher. 'The red glow from my body lighted up his face.... There's our new character, a HUMAN TORCH!' " It's safe to guess that Burgos really created the Human Torch in a more prosaic way, possibly while kicking around ideas with Bill Everett and Lloyd Jacquet.

What he'd stumbled on was a basic idea that had a tremendous appeal to kids. Most of us go through a phase in our youth where we're touched with a little pyromania—we play with mat-

LATER... IN FRONT OF POLICE HEADQUARTERS...
TORO... LOOK! A BUNDLE WAS THROWN OUT OF THE DOOR OF THAT CAR! GET IT! I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE AUTO!
GULP! IT'S THE TORCH! HE'S IN BACK OF US!
LIKE A STREAK OF LIGHTNING, THE TORCH WINGS THRU THE FRONT SEAT!
WOW! FEELS LIKE A JERK SODA!
CARAMBA! HE MELTED OFF THE STEERING WHEEL AND BRAKES!
THE CAR'S OUT OF CONTROL!
crash!
TORCH! LOOK! IT WAS WRAPPED IN THE PACKAGE!
I'M GONNA WRING THE NECK OF THE PARROT, NO DOUBT! OKAY, BOZE START TALKING!

ches, we yearn after fireworks, we attempt to concoct fiery explosives with our chemistry sets. With the Human Torch you had a hero who could play with fire and get away with it. The notion is strong enough that Burgos' admittedly less than masterful drawing couldn't smother it.

As the Torch's career progressed he toyed with the notion of having a civilian identity. For awhile, calling himself Jim Hammond, he took a job as a uniformed cop. His true identity sometimes got him in trouble with his fellow officers and even put him in the position of being told to go arrest himself. On one such occasion the Torch "burned down a block of old tenement houses infested with the black plague." Unaware of the plague, the police go after him as an arsonist. When his initial tussle with the Sub-Mariner was over, he got involved with a fanatic cult of turbaned fire worshippers and a huge green fire monster. This creature had one eye in the middle of its head, was green and possessed of a hide resembling that of a pickle. The whole mess took him three issues to clean up.

In *Marvel #17* (March, 1941) the Torch again teamed up with Sub-Mariner. This time they fought side by side against an attempted invasion of the United States by Nazi and Japanese forces. The conflict took twenty six pages to unfold. The following month Toro, the Flaming Kid, took up residence in the magazine. This fiery version of Batman's Robin was no stranger to the more dedicated HT fans, since we'd met him the preceding fall in the *Human Torch* quarterly. Back then we'd learned that while "winging his way across the country with his flame on....the Torch is attracted by the gay colored tents of a traveling circus below... and as he nears the ground, panic breaks as Toro, the fire-eating boy, suddenly topples from his stand with his body ablaze!" The Torch intervenes, helps the boy get his flame under control and out and then realizes that here's the perfect sidekick for him. Quite probably he was also aware that Dick Grayson had a circus background, too. At the end of the story HT turns to the reader to say, "Well... kids, that's the story of TORO! If you like TORO and want to see more of him... why not write to me... if you don't... just say so! Remember... this is your comic strip—so get your letters in! So long, fellers!" Sufficient fellers must've voted in the affirmative and Toro stuck around from then on.

Interestingly enough there was no explanation as to *what* was burning when Toro flamed on. Was his flesh going up in flames? Did some kind of gas come from his pores and burn? The impossibility of producing fire without burning up something didn't bother either the readers or the writers. And I must admit I never worried about the possibility that Toro or the Torch might end up a pile of ashes some day.

By the time Toro signed on Burgos' work was looking and sounding better than it had at the start. He was improving some and he was also getting help from others. A Funnies, Inc. writer named John Compton contributed many of the scripts and Harry Sahle was assisting with the drawing. In fact, most of the Torch stuff in the *Marvel #17* team up is Sahle's.

The Human Torch and Toro did some impressive work in their early adventures together and each issue's story was like a fireworks display, with the team tossing fireballs, building bridges of flame, burning through solid walls. Looking at the pages, even now, you're struck with the movement and the brightness of the colors. Basic reds and yellows dominate. The most impressive villain they combatted in their early days was a large nasty chap whose face made it obvious why he was nicknamed the Parrot. A taunting fellow, much like the Joker, he liked to send the Torch announcements of his upcoming crimes. Sometimes a real parrot was used to deliver the message. In *Marvel #24* the intended target is the Cosmopolitan Opera House and we get to see the Torch flame off, attending the gala opening night decked out in tuxedo and homburg.

When Burgos entered the service in 1942, the Torch was passed on to other hands. Edd Ashe was his immediate replacement as artist and eventually a wide range of others filled in. HT and Toro remained hot in the 1940s, showing up in *All Winners, All Select, Mystic, Daring, Captain America* and even as a backup in *Sub-Mariner*. In the spring of 1949 *Marvel* and the *Human Torch* quarterly quietly folded and the Torch and Toro were extinguished. They came back briefly in the 1950s and then, in that particular form, were gone forever.

A TIMELY WHO'S WHO

While most Timely enthusiasts can easily recognize the work of such *Marvel* all stars as Bill Everett, Jack Kirby, Paul Gustavson and Carl Burgos, they may not be familiar with the dozens of other artists who labored for that magazine and other Timely titles during the Golden Age. As a partial remedy to the situation, this section provides brief entries on a selection of these lesser-known artists along with examples of the work of each. Since there were many other artists who worked under the Timely banner, our Who's Who makes no claims to being complete.

EDD ASHE. The son of a successful illustrator, Ashe put in time at both the Chesler and Jacquet shops. During the Golden Age his work could be seen all over the place. He drew Don Winslow and Commando Yank for Fawcett, the Wizard for MLJ, the Saint for Lev Gleason. For such Fox titles as *Mystery Men Comics* and *Wonderworld* Ashe did dozens of covers. Although he was a competent artist, many of his pages have a rushed look to them.

The illustration is from a Human Torch story of the early '40s.

AL AVISON. Another comic book artist whose father was an illustrator, he began his career at the age of twenty. Avison's early style was somewhat cartoony and quirky. He later modified it into a variation of the Jack Kirby approach. For Timely he drew, sometimes in collaboration with Al Gabriele, Captain America, Father Time, the incomparable mongoose-inspired Whizzer and Stan Lee's Destroyer. Avison also did considerable work for *Wings Comics* and later drew the Green Hornet for the Harvey Brothers.

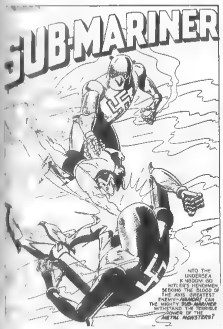
Our Destroyer sample, a solo effort, is from *Mystic #7*.

SID GREENE. A highly individual artist, he was with Funnies, Inc. during the early 1940s. Greene's pages then were rich with odd angle shots, long lean people and meticulous inking. For *Marvel* he drew that second string star-spangled hero the Patriot. Over at *Target Comics* he got to illuminate the adventures of that magazine's star boarder, the Target himself. Supposedly at the time Greene was an enthusiastic admirer of movie actress Ingrid Bergman and if you study his pages you'll notice the name Ingrid lettered on boats, etc. In the Silver Age Greene, often with Gil Kane, did a great deal of work for DC on such characters as the Atom, Hawkman and Elongated Man.

Our Patriot sample is from *Marvel #24.*

GEORGE MANDEL. He started working as a letterer while in his teens and sporting "a moustache that myopics couldn't see." From lettering Mandel graduated to drawing for *Thrilling Comics*, where his most successful feature was Doc Strange. "After a few months I went freelance, working for Funnies, Inc., MLJ, Fox, Chesler, Hillman and some others I can't recall." For Timely Mandel drew the Angel, the Black Marvel and the Patriot. He turned out Blue Bolt for Novelty Press, Young Robin Hood and Jinx and 13 for Lev Gleason. His brother Alan also worked in comics, sometimes inking Mandel's pencils. After the war he became a novelist; *Flee The Angry Strangers* and *The Wax Boom* are probably his best-known books. It is also rumored that his army career inspired his friend Joseph Heller's *Catch 22.*

Our Angel sampling comes from *Marvel Mystery Comics.*



CARL PFEUFER. A prolific comic book artist in the 1940s, he came into the field after working as a pulp illustrator and drawing several syndicate newspaper strips. Pfeufer's major achievement in this latter area was the handsome science fiction Sunday page *Don Dixon*, a *Flash Gordon* simulacrum that commenced in the mid '30s and ended in the early '40s. He took over Sub-Mariner after Everett entered the army, doing a creditable, though sometimes hurried, job. He had a distinctive style and, when he took his time, turned out attractive stuff. He too was affiliated with the Jacquet shop. After Timely he did considerable work for Fawcett, drawing Mr. Scarlet, Don Winslow, Commando Yank and cowboys such as Tom Mix and Hopalong Cassidy. In the '50s he returned to newspaper comics and drew several less than successful ones, including *The Bantam Prince*. Pfeufer is in his seventies and, at last report, still active as an illustrator.

The panel reprinted here is from a Sub-Mariner story.

MIKE ROY. Barely out of his teens when he signed up with Funnies, Inc., the Canadian-born Roy inked for Burgos and also ghosted several Sub-Mariner stories. All the Sub-Mariner sections in *Human Torch #5*, another of the Torch-Subby battle issues, are by him. He drew an obscure superguy known as the Twister for *Blue Bolt*, later produced true gangster tales for *Crime Does Not pay*. For the newspapers he drew two famous detectives, the Saint (Jack Davis was one of his inkers on this) and later Nero Wolfe. That was followed by an Indian Sunday page with the melodious name of *Akwas* and then a gag panel called *Hoss Laffs*. Roy did his best work in the late '40s and early '50s, when he was under the influence of Dan Barry. When last heard of Roy was working in public relations in the Washington, DC area.

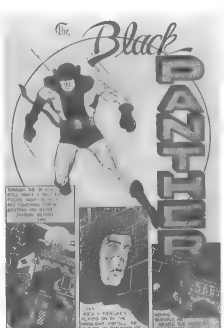
This sample is from *Sub-Mariner #3*.

HARRY SAHLE. Another stalwart on the Funnies, Inc. team in the early 1940s, he was capable of drawing both straight adventure and bigfoot comedy. He handled popular superheroes, most notably the Human Torch, as well as some that few but historians recall—Air Man, Captain Courageous, The Green Giant. For Timely, besides ghosting the Torch, Sahle also did the Black Widow and the Fiery Mask. He switched to funny stuff during World War II when he succeeded Bob Montana on the increasingly popular Archie. After leaving MLJ he created Candy, another teenager, for *Police Comics* of all places. At one point the sexy bobbysoxer had her own newspaper strip and a comic book in her name as well. While far from technically perfect, Sahle's work was attractive and likeable. He died young.

Our example is from the Silver Scorpion, a lady crimebuster feature that flourished briefly in Timely's *Daring*.

GOLDEN AGE PORTFOLIO

EVERETT: KIRBY: GUSTAVSON



In keeping with our Timely theme, this porfolio showcases the work of artists who were regular contributors to *Marvel, Daring, Mystic*, etc.

From the redoubtable Bill Everett comes an adventure of the Chameleon, master of disguise. Although the *Price Guide* hasn't as yet noticed, this yarn contains some Good Mens' Underwear Art.

Just before Captain America came along Jack Kirby drew, probably solo, two episodes in the career of the Black Owl. Ours is the second, from *Prize Comics #9* (February, 1941).

Paul Gustavson was responsible for inventing dozens of other heroes besides the Angel. We're reprinting his Black Panther, a furclad crimebuster who appeared exactly once, in *Stars and Stripes Comics #3* (July, 1941).

THE BLACK OWL
BARNEY DUNN
BARNEY DUNN
THEY!! THEY!!! THEY!!!!

THAT GANG OF DOPES AND DEN-MOTHERS BY THEIR CRIMINAL TRAIL OF BROKEN POLICE BADGES WHEREVER THEY OPERATED!
OH... I'VE SOMETHING I DON'T KNOW!
OKAY--I'LL BET YOU LOVE MIND WE'RE GONNA CATCH THIS LADY SMART HORSE!
--AND ALL YOU HAVE TO CORNER HERE AGAIN--WHAT'S THAT YOU SAID?
YOU--FAR OVE CORSE-FACE
Y KNOW, MISTER CANAVAN, THE DEADLIEST COBRA S OFTEN A PUSH-OVER FOR A FAST-IGHTING MONGOOSE
OH--I SEE YOU FIGURE ON SETTING A MONGOOSE ON HER TRAIL--THAT'S--
NO ED--AN OWL--A BLACK OWL!--
YOU MEAN...
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN--WANT TO LISTEN TO A PLAN?
UTSIDE SAM'S OFFICE...
OH-OH! LOOKS LIKE OUR ACE CHOKERS ARE WATCHING ANOTHER SCOOP--OR A LIBEL SUIT!
BY THE WAY, THEY'RE CACKLING... IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE HAVING TO BOT--
THE NEXT DAY DOUG DANVILLE, SOCIETY GLAMOUR BOY WHO IS REALLY THE BLACK OWL, IS TERRY DANE, FEMALE SLEUTH
--ELLO TERRY--WHAT'S UP?
--HE BIGGEST THING N YEARS HAVEN'T YOU READ THE EVENING PAPERS?
EWS-S
BLACK OWL PROMISES MYSTERY MOB CAPTURE
WE HAVE MADE AN MYSTERY MOB JAM IN HANDS OF TOMORROW EVENING WRITES JUNK-DAY CRIME BUSTER
NO I HAVEN'T--WHAT TH--! THIS CAN'T BE TRUE... WHY, I NEVER---
2

...WHAT MAKES YOU SO KEEN ON ABOUT THIS STORY DOING?
THE BLACK OWL'S ALWAYS WORKED IN SECRECY, TERRY...HE'S NEVER REVEALED PLANS TO ANYONE
OBVIOUSLY THIS REPORTER DUNN IS PROMOTING A MATCH WHICH HE HOPES WILL RESULT IN A PUBLICATION JUMP.
WHETHER HE IS OR NOT, THIS MADAME MYSTERY AND HER MOB ARE THE IDEAL CHOICE FOR THE BLACK OWL'S MOP-UP LIST.
PERHAPS THEY ARE...
HMM...ONE CAN'T TELL, CAN ONE?
MEANWHILE...IN ANOTHER SECTION OF THE CITY GRACEFUL, TAPERING FINGERS GENTLY FOLD A NEWSPAPER AS A SOFT, FEMINE CHUCKLE IS HEARD---
A-R-G-H, MISTER BLACK OWL...I ACCEPT YOUR CHALLENGE
SOMEWHERE FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE DARKENED HOUSE COMES A SCREAM OF AGONY
Y-A-AH-H-H-H-HH!!
WHAT NOW? BARNEY AWAITS DEVELOPMENTS...
OHOO THERE'S THE BLACK OWL NOW THERE GOES
HELP! LET ME GO!
OUCH!
A DAME!

SHE'S IN MY ROOM! YOU'RE TEARING THE REWARD SHEARS!
MARVELOUS DETECTION, DEAR HERO!
—AND WHY, MAY I ASK... ARE YOU HIDING IN MY ROOM?
I'M WAITING FOR THE BLACK OWL... AREN'T YOU?
I WONDER WHAT'S KEEPING THE OWL? SHOULD'VE PLANNED ON YOU A BIT LATER—I'M BEAT OF YOURS
—AND THREE'S A CROWD, SPOIL YOUR FUN WITH THE BLACK OWL! BY THE WAY, THE POLICE ARE RUNNING THIS
YOU'RE A CLEVER DETECTIVE, BUT YOU'RE RUNNING THIS
HEY! SHOW UP! TREAD LIGHTLY
PLEASE HANDS UP, FINO
WHA—
FINO, COME ALONG QUIETLY
MAKE IT SNAPPY, SIS!
NEARBY... IN THE BLACK SHADOWS, A FIGURE WATCHES!
4

I WISH THEY HAD A RUMBLE SEAT!
ALL RIGHT...THIS IS YOUR LAST STOP.
THIS IS SHOOT BOSS...I MISSED HE ONLY BUT GOT HIS PAL DOWN- AND A FRIEND.
THERE IS A WHIR OF HIDDEN MACHINERY AND A PANEL IN THE BASEMENT WALL SLIDES UP TO REVEAL A HIDDEN ELEVATOR...
HERE THEY ARE BOSS
EMERGE IN A BEAUTIFUL APARTMENT!
YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL. YOU EGOTISTICAL MURDEROUS
5

YOU FLATTER ME, MISTER DUNN--ALTHOUGH I HARDLY EXPECT YOUR FRIEND AND YOU TO BE SOCIABLE SINCE YOU BOTH AREN'T EXACTLY HERE FOR TEA
IN FACT, MISTER DUNN--AFTER YOU AND MISS DANE HAVE SERVED TO TRAP THE BLACK OWL, YOU WILL BE PUT TO DEATH!
SNOOT! HAVE THESE PEOPLE SECURELY BOUND!
HELLO...MONK? BRING UP SOME ROPE TO THE BOSS'S ROOM--PRONTO
I GETCHA, CHIEF--I'LL BE UP IN A FLASH
I'LL RETURN YOUR COAT AND HAT TO YOUR CELL, MONK
MINUTE LATER, THE ROPE IS BROUGHT TO THE CAPTORS..
THESE TWO SHOULD BE ENOUGH TO BAIT THE BLACK OWL--WE'LL BE HERE ANY MINUTE
UNNOTICED BY THE GROUP, THE NEWCOMER LOCKS THE DOOR BEHIND HIM---
CLICK!
WHAT THE..! HEY, BOSS! LOOK! HIS EYES--GOGGLES--THAT AIN'T MONK...IT'S--
THE BLACK OWL!

I'LL TEACH YOU TO SHOOT AT ME, YOU DIRTY LITTLE KILLER. HEY, DUNN, ARE YOU JOINING THE PARTY?
POW!
UGH!
YEAH
NOT SO FAST, BLACK OWL... DO YOU THINK MADAME MYSTERY A FOOL TO GO UNARMED?
PREPARE TO DIE!
WHAT?-- ARE YOU SAYING MY PRAYERS?
UP WITH YOUR HANDS!
BARNEY DUNN SCOOPS UP THE GUN...
OH!
THANKS, HONEY. DUNN, WILL HOLD 'EM WHILE WE GO FOR A SKYRIDE AND GET HELP!
7

BULL'S EYE! HOPE THAT LAMP HOLDS NOW COME ON... YOU'RE GOING PIGGY-BACK
HANG ON, KID... HERE WE GO!
CRASH!
THE OWL LANDS ON AN ADJOINING ROOF...
DUNN'S STILL IN THERE LOCKED IN WITH THOSE KILLERS!
SO LONG! I'VE GOT TO HURRY!
OWL... WAIT!
GONE! BEFORE I COULD THANK HIM FOR SAVING MY LIFE
A FEW MINUTES LATER THE OWL CALLS THE POLICE!
WELL MY JOB'S DONE! MADAME MYSTERY IS AS GOOD AS IN THE JUG, AND BARNEY DUNN IS A MUCH MILDER PERSON, I THINK--
8

THE NEXT DAY, NEWS OF THE CAPTURE OF MADAME MYSTERY AND HER GANG IS GREETED BY A JUBILANT PUBLIC!
GENERAL HOSPITAL
THANKS FOR THE BOOST, BARNEY! THAT WAS A GREAT SCHEME HERE'S A BOOK FROM THE PAPER
OWL!
SAY, I'VE GOT A GREAT IDEA FOR A NEW SCOOP ED -- IT'LL MAKE THIS STORY LOOK LIKE A NURSERY RHYME! NOW, LISTEN...
IN HER CELL... MADAME MYSTERY REMAINS HER CONFIDENT, GLAMOROUS SELF!
FOOLS! FAILS TO REALIZE I'M THE BRAINS BEHIND THE GANG! MISTER BLACK OWL!
TERRY DANE SIGHED BY DOLO DANIELS
LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE FRESH AS SOME HAVE COME AROUND AGAIN
THE BLACK OWL -- I'VE NEVER HEARD OF HIM!
DON'T GET ME WRONG, TERRY -- I CAN'T BLAME ME FOR BEING JEALOUS OF THAT ROOF-HOPPING ACROBAT -- AND YOU THE WAY I DO.
THE BLACK OWL Smashes ANOTHER CRIME RING IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF PRIZE COMICS!

The Black DAZTIER
THROUGH THE BLACK, STILL NIGHT, A SINISTER FIGURE MOVES SLOWLY.... HIS TOWERING FORM CASTING HIS EERIE SHADOW BEFORE HIM....
.. HIS HIDEOUS FEATURES, PLAYED ON BY THE MOONLIGHT, FORTELL THE FUTURE IN THOUGHTS OF WEIRD HORROR ....
MOVING SILENTLY, HE NEARS THE HOME OF PROFESSOR TAFT....

REACHING THE HOUSE, THE WEIRD PROWLER SEES WIRES STRETCHED ACROSS THE GROUND
PICKING UP A BROKEN LIMB OF A TREE, HE HURLS IT AT THE WIRES. AT ONCE, FLASHES OF ELECTRICITY BLAZE UP ABOUT HIM...
HEH-HEH-HEH! THAT WON'T STOP ME, PROFESSOR. AH—THE TREE WILL DO THE TRICK!
BY CLIMBING THE TREE, THE FIGURE SWINGS TO THE ROOF OF PROFESSOR'S HOUSE....
MEANWHILE... IN THE BASEMENT LABORATORY OF THE HOUSE...
AT LAST—IT'S FINISHED! CHECKED AND RE-CHECKED!
WITH THE FLUID IN THIS SMALL TEST-TUBE, I CAN PETRIFY ANY LIVING ANIMAL ON EARTH... AND BRING THEM OUT OF IT WITH AN ANTIDOTE.
THEN
WITHIN A FEW MINUTES, THE PROWLER DRAGS PROFESSOR TAFT INTO HIS OWN CAR AND BEGINS TO DRIVE AWAY.
AS IT PASSES UNDER A TREE NEAR THE DRIVEWAY A SINISTER, CAT-LIKE FORM LEAPS ONTO THE ROOF OF THE CAR... IT'S THE BLACK PANTHER!

I'D HAVE STOPPED YOU SOONER BUD, BUT I'VE A FEELING THAT THERE'S MORE TO THIS THAN JUST A PLAIN KIDNAPPING!
THE CAR SPEEDS THROUGH A LONELY ROAD TOWARD AN OLD ABANDONED CASTLE IN THE WOODS NEAR THE TOWN..
A SHORT DISTANCE FROM THE CASTLE, THE CAR TURNS OFF THE ROAD AND HEADS FOR A CLUMP OF BUSHES IN FRONT OF A HIGH CLIFF...
OH-OH- THAT WAS CLOSE! A HIDDEN TUNNEL EH? TOO BAD I HAD TO LEAVE THAT BUGGY BECAUSE OF THE CEILING!
WITH THE BLACK PANTHER LEFT BEHIND, THE CAR MAKES ITS WAY THROUGH THE DARK TUNNEL UNTIL IT REACHES A BLANK STONE WALL...
A FEW FEET FROM THE WALL, IT PARTS— LETTING THE CAR INTO A LARGE LABORATORY EQUIPPED WITH EVERY KNOWN SCIENTIFIC APPARATUS!
AH— YOU HAVE BROUGHT PROFESSOR TAFT, ARGO! YOU HAVE DONE WELL IN SUCH A SHORT TIME!
3

WHO ARE YOU—AND WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ME?
ERICK ROGATS IS THE NAME!
I WANT NOTHING MYSELF—BUT MY COUNTRY WANTS YOUR PETRIFYING DISCOVERY! THIS EXTENSIVE LABORATORY IS FOR YOUR USE IN PERFECTING IT—WHICH YOU MUST!
IT IS PERFECTED—I HEARD HIM SAY SO—AND HERE IS THE FORMULA!
AH! GOOD, ARGO!
VERY SIMPLE—I SHALL HAVE SOME MADE AND READY FOR A TEST IN NO TIME AT ALL!!
BUT—AS ROGATS TRIES THE SERUM PREPARED FROM THE FORMULA....
WHAT TH?? THE GUINEA PIG DIED INSTANTLY!
YES BECAUSE I DIDN'T WRITE DOWN THE IMPORTANT INGREDIENTS TO MY DISCOVERY ONLY MEMORIZED THEM—AND WHAT THEY ARE, YOU WILL NEVER KNOW!
WELL SEE ABOUT THAT! ARGO—THE CLAMPS!
BUT—THE EVER WATCHFUL EYES OF THE BLACK PANTHER SEE WHAT IS GOING ON
THE FIEND—HE'S GOING TO USE TORTURE!
BEGIN, ARGO! NOW WE'LL SEE ABOUT THE REST OF THE FORMULA PROFESSOR!
NEVER!

AS ROGATS ORDERS ARGO TO BEGIN TORTURING PROFESSOR TAFT, THE BLACK PANTHER STRIKES...
THE BLACK PANTHER!
AT ONCE, ROGATS CHARGES AT PROFESSOR TAFT WITH THE HYPODERMIC OF THE INCOMPLETE PETRIFYING SERUM....
But HIS CHARGE IS MET BY THE STREAKING BLACK PANTHER....
OKAY, BUD— YOU'VE PULLED YOUR LAST JOB IN THIS COUNTRY

AS THE BLACK PANTHER BATTERS ROGATS, ARGO SPRINGS UPON HIM AGAIN.
OH YEAH?
THROWN UPON ROGATS, ARGO SUDDENLY LETS OUT A BELLOWING SCREAM AND STIFFENS....
WITH THE BLACK PANTHER ATTRACTED BY THIS GHASTLY SIGHT, ROGATS DASHES OUT OF THE LABORATORY....
NO YOU DONT!
BUT THE SLY ROGATS KEEPS JUST OUTSIDE THE BLACK PANTHERS GRASP....
...UNTIL HE IS FINALLY TRAPPED AT THE TOP OF A TOWER IN THE OLD CASTLE...

HA-HA- YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE A MATCH FOR ME, EH? YOU EVEN THINK YOU HAVE ME TRAPPED NOW!
THE FOOL— HE'S GOING TO CLIMB DOWN THE WALL!
HA HA HA! PERHAPS WE SHALL MEET AGAIN! OH--- HELP— MY HAND... IT'S SLIPPING... HELP!
IN A TERRIFYING SCREAM, ROGATS FALLS DOWN INTO THE QUICK SAND MIRE, FAR BELOW THE CASTLE TOWER..
..and..A FEW MOMENTS LATER.....
THEN— ALL THAT IS LEFT OF ROGATS IS A CIRCLE ON THE BLACK MIRE... SLOWLY FADING.... LEAVING NO TRACE OF HIS WICKED SELF...
PERHAPS YOU'RE A LOT BETTER OFF— YOU MIGHT HAVE HAD TO SERVE THE REST OF YOUR DAYS BEHIND BARS.

The Chameleon
by
DOUG ALLAN
and
BILL EVERETT
SENATOR DODGE AT THE END OF THE Chameleon IS WORKING INDEPENDENTLY OF THE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE TRYING TO APPREHEND THE LEADER RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISAPPEARANCE OF VITAL PLANS FOR NATIONAL FORTIFICATIONS — WE FIND THE SENATOR TALKING WITH THE Chameleon IN HIS PRIVATE STUDY.....
THE COMMITTEE BELIEVES THAT YOU'RE BEHIND THE THEFT OF THE PLANS Chameleon BUT I'M CONVINCED IT'S SOMEONE ELSE!
NO DOUBT THERE ARE SEVERAL IN ON IT, DODGE.
A CHAMELEON IS, "A PLAIN LIZARD WHICH CHANGES COLOR" — OUR Chameleon IS A MASTER OF DISGUISE, WHO KNOWS WHERE AND IN WHAT FORM HE'LL TURN UP TO HAUNT GANGS OR GANGSTERS.
HAVE YOU ANY CLUES AT ALL?
THANKS, SLIM - KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN!
INSIDE THE RESTAURANT THE DISGUISED Chameleon OVERHEARS -
HERE THEY ARE, HANS. TAKE THEM OUT!
JA! LEAF QUICKLY NOW SO NO VUN VILL SUZPEGT!
HMMM - THIS LOOKS INTERESTING!

AS HANS STARTS TOWARD A STAIRWAY, THE Chameleon WATCHES CLOSELY.
YOU WANT TO EAT, HANS?
I BE RIGHT BACK, PIERRE.
QUIETLY THE Chameleon RISES TO FOLLOW, UNAWARE THAT OTHER EYES ARE ON HIM—
WHERE YOU THINK YOU'RE GOIN', PAL?
HUH?
WHEREVER IT IS, I'M GOING ALONE!
THE Chameleon DASHES UP THE STAIRS AFTER HANS—
HOPE I HAVEN'T LOST HIM!
IN THE SECOND-FLOOR HALLWAY....
HOLD ON THERE, OR I'LL BEAN YOU!
YOU DON'T GET DIS, YOU— HALP!
THE Chameleon MAKES SHORT WORK OF HANS AND BINDING HIM, SHOVES HIM INTO A HALL CLOSET....
YOU OUGHT TO KEEP OUT OF MISCHIEF IN HERE—NO? A WHILE!
UGH!
A FEW MINUTES LATER, DISGUISED AS HANS, HE STARTS TOWARD THE STAGE DOOR. A DOOR OPENS, AND HE IS ACCOSTED—
AH, HANS! YOU HAVE PACKAGE FROM HONORABLE AGENT?
HUH? OH! HA, HA! I THINK SO. SSSH IT!

WONG WILL TAKE PACKAGE, HANS
JA? SO - ALREADY I FORGET DOT WONG!
THE Chameleon's MIND RACES—
WHY YOU PUT IT IN DER SAFE?
ONLY UNTIL MASTER COME - WITHIN HOUR
AND HE ATTACKS BEFORE WONG CAN CLOSE THE SAFE!
OH, NO YOU DON'T, MY FINE FEATHERED FRIEND!
MASTER WILL— YEOW!
TOO BAD THERE ISN'T A NICE BIG EMPTY WASTE BASKET.
LATER, POSING AS "WONG," THE Chameleon RECEIVES A DARK, SWARTHY STRANGER.
I'M LOUIS. TH' BOSS SENT ME TO PICK UP A PACKAGE
OH - YES THERE HAS BEEN SOME TROUBLE — I GO TO MASTER WITH YOU!
HOW FAR WE GO, LOUIS?
OH, YEAH - YOU AIN'T BEEN TO TH' BOSS' JOINT YET, HAVE YA? IT'S THE BIG WHITE HOUSE AT THE END OF STATE STREET.
AS THE Chameleon RIDES WITH LOUIS IN A BIG SEDAN, SLIM FOLLOWS IN THE Chameleon's SPEED-COUPE.
SUDDENLY THE Chameleon'S FALSE MUSTACHE COMES LOOSE AND HE GRABS FOR IT, ATTRACTING LOUIS' ATTENTION!
SAY! YOU AIN'T WONG! WHO ARE YOU?
SO SORRY MY CAT-EYED FRIEND - NOW I'LL HAVE TO DISPOSE OF YOU!

IT DOESN'T PAY TO BE TOO SMART, LOUIS!
NEED ANY HELP, BOSS?
LOUIS STOPS THE CAR, AND THE Chameleon KNOCKS HIM UNCONSCIOUS AS "SLIM" PULLS UP ALONGSIDE —
DISGUISED AS LOUIS, THE Chameleon TAKES THE WHEEL A FEW MOMENTS LATER.
I'LL DELIVER THIS PACKAGE MYSELF, SLIM. TAKE CARE OF OUR SLEEPING BEAUTY!
DON'T WORRY, BOSS — WE'LL BE HERE WHEN YOU GET BACK.
MEANWHILE, A SMALL GROUP MEETS IN THE MANSION OF JAMES RALSTON, INFLUENTIAL POLITICIAN.
GET RID OF THE Chameleon, GENTLEMEN, AND OUR TROUBLES ARE OVER.
JUST LET ME GET MY HANDS ON HIM ONCE, THAT'S ALL!
I DON'T AGREE, RALSTON — I DON'T THINK HE'S RESPONSIBLE.
AT THE SAME TIME, SLIM IS CAUGHT OFF GUARD BY THE REVIVED LOUIS....
MUST HAVE BEEN THE Chameleon, WONG. WE'LL HAVE TO HURRY TO THE MASTER!
AND AT THE "CHOP HOUSE" WONG COMES TO, AND FREES HANS
AND AT THE MANSION AGAIN....
LOUIS IS HERE TO SEE YOU, MASTER
VERY WELL, HIGGINS — SEND HIM IN
HERE IS THE MEDICINE, GEORGE. LOUIS AND I WILL TAKE IT DOWNSTAIRS
SURE THING BOSS! (TO HIS "MASTER")
IN THE BASEMENT, THE Chameleon LEARNS THE HIDING-PLACE OF THE STOLEN PLANS.
WE'LL KEEP THE PLANS IN HERE WITH THE OTHERS, LOUIS
OKAY, BOSS!

YEAH, HE SLUGGED US THEN DISGUISED HIMSELF AS ONE OF US!
THEN WE WE GOT IM WHERE WE WANT HIM COME ON!
HEARING THE FAMILIAR VOICES UPSTAIRS, RALSTON TURNS ON THE Chameleon.
...HIMSELF LIKE US!
Why, it's RALSTON! the Chameleon!!!
Chameleon YES, BUT WE TAKE RALSTON AS WE ARE ABOUT TO FIND OUT!
QUIET, FOOL!
S-THIS BOAT!
TO THE VAULT QUICK!
THE Chameleon RAPIDLY STRIPS RALSTON AND THROWS HIM INTO THE VAULT WITH THE OTHERS, LOCKING THE DOOR BEHIND THEM.
HEAVEN'S HERE COMES LOUIS, HANS HELP!!!
I HEARD A RACKET DOWN HERE MR RALSTON - THOUGHT MAYBE THERE WAS SOME TROUBLE!
THERE WAS DEFINITELY PARKS. MY MEN HAVE CAPTURED THE Chameleon.
NOW IMPERSONATING RALSTON, HE MEETS PARKS AT THE BASEMENT STAIRS -
HE CAN'T GET AWAY. COME INSIDE WHILE I TELL THE OTHER MEN.
I KNEW I'D GET THAT SLIPPERY BANANA ONE O' THESE DAYS!
GENTLEMEN, AT LAST WE'VE GOT THE Chameleon! I WANT TO COME AND SEE FOR YOURSELVES.
YEP - WE'VE GOT 'IM LOCKED UP TIGHT IN THE VAULT!

I WANT YOU TO OPEN THE DOOR PARKS SO YOU CAN GRAB HIM
IT'LL BE A PLEASURE!
MEANWHILE, INSIDE THE VAULT....
BLAST YOU, HIGGINS! YOU'RE THE ONE WHO LET HIM IN!
THAT'S RIGHT, BOSS - GIVE IT TO 'IM!
CAREFUL, MEN. THE Chameleon IS A DESPERATE CHARACTER!
OPEN HER UP PARKS
RALSTON! WHY? WOUGHT— SAY WHAT IS THIS???
WHERE'S THAT Chameleon? GRAB HIM BOYS!!!
HA!
IN THEIR MAD RUSH TO SEIZE THE Chameleon, THE CROOKS GET ENTANGLED, AND —
LOOK OUT— CONFOUND IT!
THERE HE GOES— UP THE STAIRS! Eeks!
DON'T SHOOT, MEN— THERE'S A REWARD FER— AFRAID? WHAT'S THIS???
DETECTIVE PARKS READS
Um-ll find all the clues I need at the scene of the crime, in the vault, to convict your friend Ralston for leader of the gang, Sorry! Better luck next time! The Chameleon

SECOND BANANA

Second Banana. Not every hero hits it big. Many interesting and exciting characters never really headline their own titles although they may gain devoted followings. This feature will take a look at one of the minor characters that populated the comic books of the 1940s.

One of the few costumed heroes to sport a moustache, the Angel commenced operations in *Marvel #1* and hung on until #79 (December, 1946). He also backed up Prince Namor in the first twenty-one issues of the Sub-Mariner quarterly. He was the creation of Paul Gustavson, who later maintained that what he had in mind was an imitation of the Saint. The average case handled by the blue-clad Angel, however, would have given the urbane Simon Templar the heebie jeebies.

In his earliest adventures The Angel, who had no civilian identity although he did now and then show up in a business suit, satisfied himself with combating crooks and gangsters. By the fourth issue of *Marvel Mystery* hoodlums are still present but they have a monster working for them. During his second year in business things pick up and the Angel starts encountering such problems as a werewolf ("a hideous half-animal and half-human form"), a green, slavering chap known as the Python ("contortionist and tool of the Gestapo") and the Armless Tiger Man who gnaws his victims to death ("the viscious flash of white you see is the flash of teeth, TEETH! TEETH!").

The twenty-fourth issue of *Marvel* introduced one of the most unsettling villains, a white-smocked chap calling himself Dr. Hyde. His specialty, as a breathless caption explained, was a somewhat unusual one—"Some men held up banks and others kidnapped children, but the terrible loot of Dr. Hyde was eyes... HUMAN EYES!"

Sure enough, we see the insidious doctor climbing into an unsuspecting victim's bedroom and plucking his eyeballs right out of their sockets. What Hyde then does, after carrying off the eyes in the palm of his hand is offer to put them back for a flat fee of $100,000. Despite the far from antiseptic way he works, the doctor actually can restore sight. And he has quite a good racket going until the shadow of the Angel falls across his path.

The Second World War years were a particularly fruitful period for the Angel. During that time he met an impressive array of monsters, zombies, living skeletons and simple everyday madmen. During Gustavson's tenure on the feature the Angel often got involved in a case by way of protecting a pretty young woman, usually a blonde, from some dire peril. Since he had an an instinct for this sort of thing, the lady didn't even have to solicit his aid. He simply appeared to keep an eye on her, like "an unseen guardian". Gustavson relinquished the feature after #21 (July, 1941) and just prior to that he pitted his angelic avenger against a formidable villainess who dressed up in a black pantherskin costume, committed a series of viscious murders and called herself the Cat's Paw. It took the Angel three issues to bring her to justice. Despite the gloom and doom that was his lot, the Angel was always ready with a quip or a snappy rejoinder. On incapacitating a voodoo drummer, for instance, he remarked, "This is the end of your musical career, bud!" And when he was skeptical about a spectral manifestation he said, "So... that's the Weird Ghost of Amber Swamps, eh? Ghost my foot!"

A variety of artists carried on after Gustavson. George Mandel, Mike Roy, Gus Schrotter and Jimmy Thompson among them.

HORRORS!

CAP MEETS THE MONSTERS

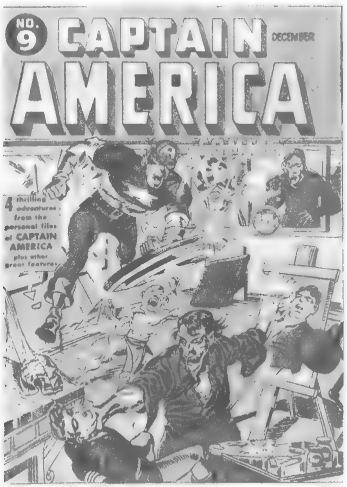
By Mike Barson

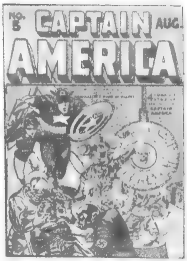
The first ten issues of *Captain America* comics are today considered classics by collectors and historians alike. This was the first major title the team of Joe Simon and Jack Kirby worked on regularly, aside from their stint on the first ten issues of *Blue Bolt* in 1940, and perhaps nostalgia has a good deal to do with that esteem. To look at them today, those ten issues of Cap are at best uneven in terms of both art—which was diluted, it would appear, by artists from the Timely staff such as Syd Shores and Vince Alcasia, who would soon inherit the title when S & K jumped to DC—and story.

Ah, those early stories. What a crazy combination of 1930s movies, pulps and detective fiction. Simon and Kirby—and whoever wrote these issues—borrowed freely and without reservation—or logic. *The Mummy*, meet *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, meet *Terror Tales*. Fu Manchu, meet Frankenstein.

The horror elements of the S & K Caps were most evident on the covers, which—like most other Timely titles of the day—used the menace and torture motifs of such pulps as *Dime Mystery* and *Horror Stories*. Instead of a beautiful blonde, though, the creeps were doing it to Bucky. (Hmmm... there's food for thought.) In some cases the covers had little to do with the contents (such as issue #8, which was not drawn by Simon and Kirby), but generally one of the most horror-oriented interior stories was featured—"Horror Hospital" in #4, "The Black Talon" in #9.

But *were* those interior stories truly horror tales? They certainly *sounded* pretty horrific. "The Hunchback of Hollywood"... "The Phantom Hound of Cardiff Manor"... "The Mystery of the Deathless Monsters"... "The Wax





Statue that Struck Death". But in the great majority of cases, the horror elements of the stories are there mostly as a come-on, a tease. The supernatural is usually revealed to be very much a part of the natural world—the witch is someone in a costume, the hunchback is someone in a costume, the mummy is someone in a costume—even the mysterious giant butterfly is just a little old guy in a costume. And when a costume can't be used to explain away events, a scientific formula is produced to clear things up. Simon and Kirby knew that horror sells comics—just look at the Batman stories of 1939 and 1940—but for some reason they weren't willing to go all the way and call a spade a spade—or let a monster be a monster, really and truly.

One of the few stories that really does deliver on the horror among the 30 Cap stories in those first ten issues was the lead tale in issue #2 (April 1941), "The Ageless Orientals Who Wouldn't Die". A bad guy named Benson is using huge, mindless orientals to strangle people and rob banks. These creatures are impervious to weapons of any kind—unless the weapon makes a loud noise. Then they crumple to the ground, lifeless. Cap and Bucky and special agent Betty Ross uncover the secret of these ten-foot-tall terrors by story's end, but not before Cap has been captured by the giants and brought to Benson who is only too glad to spill the beans. It seems he and a pal were wandering through the mountains of Tibet when they came across these ancient beings, and found that sound could control them. Their next step was to bring them back to the States (how?) in order to make large sums of money without earning it the old-fashioned way. Bucky sets off a cannon that is loud enough to kill all the giants, and Benson himself dies in the fire that follows. But at least the oriental giants really *do* turn out to be just what they appear to be, instead of the product of some formula or (shudder) a bunch of bozos in Halloween costumes.

Perhaps the most perfect example of the horror stories in Cap that are explained away as some natural or scientific phenomenon is the one that appeared in *All Winners #1* (Summer 1941), "The Case of the Hollow Men". As the first page blurb proclaims, "Men who are dead—and yet not dead! What are these walking dead whose clutching hands and staring eyes seek only to kill and destroy under the guidance of a mad monster?" For once, that description was not merely a tease —Cap and Bucky really *do* have to battle zombies under the control of a nut, albeit a nut who, typically, is working for Hitler. At least he charges Adolph a million dollars for each job of sabotage!

"The Lord of Death," as he is grandiloquently referred to throughout the story, is scouring New York City's Bowery section, and transforming the bums who frequent it into mindless, bloodthirsty zombies. This he does by

HOTEL of HORROR
REGISTER
OF DEATH
CAPTAIN AMERICA

DRAGGED BEFORE THE ALTAR OF BETTA-TA, GIVE HER THE FIRST MARKING OF HER NEW DANGER!..
HELP!
WHILE NEARBY--
GOOD LORD! THE HOUND'S AFTER MARY SCOTT!
CAPTAIN AMERICA AND BUCKY ARE JUST AS THE HOUND LEAPS!
GROWRRR!
CAP TACKLES THE HOUND BEFORE HE CAN REACH HIS INTENDED VICTIM!
MAN AND BEAST BECOME LOCKED IN A TERRIBLE, FEROCIOUS BATTLE TO THE DEATH!
CAP! LOOK OUT! HE'S GOING TO--!
13

offering them "a good meal and plenty to drink for practically no work at all." He then transports them to his underground laboratory, where their blood is drained by a machine, which then replaces it with a fluid poetically named "Di-namo fluid". (Maybe the Lord of Death is a frustrated gas station attendant.) "This liquid," he explains, "Will give a body super vitality for twenty-four hours! During this period he cannot die!" The supercharged bums are then turned loose on New York City to wreak general havok on the assumption that they can create enough trouble to "wreck the nation".

Cap and Bucky infiltrate the Lord's lab by disguising themselves as bums and clobbering him. They never do seem particularly curious as to the properties of Di-namo fluid, which allows a sword to pass through a body without making it slow down in the least. But then, the practical application of a potion that works for just 25 hours before (presumably) killing the subject has admittedly limited usefulness. Still, it must be said that "The Case of Hollow Men" has some pretty fair chills in it, despite the scientific explanation for what is taking place. The army of "living-dead men" strangling hapless city dwellers and trying to set fire to a ship docked in the harbor was a distinct nastiness that would have been unthinkable even to the baddest of the DC bad guys.

More typical of the sort of horror "tease" that fans of Cap were offered was the lead story from issue #8, "The Strange Mystery of the Ruby of the Nile and It's Heritage of Horror". (Timely at least gave you your money's worth in verbose titles.) The splash panel, as always, is promising. Dwarfing the figures of Cap and Bucky is the towering figure of "Ra, the Avenger", an Egyptian Isis-like figure with the head of a bird and enormous clawed hands: "the fiendish ghoul of ancient Egypt," we are told. To make a long and very silly story short, the figure of Ra that materializes in a cloud of smoke threatening to take back the ruby that was stolen from its tomb is simply Henry Sanders, one of the discoverers of the ruby who didn't want to share the proceeds with his partners. This hardly explains how Sanders manages to clobber Cap at one point in the story, or how Sanders manages to materialize and dematerialize whenever he feels like it. Or how he manages to grow to eight feet tall. Details, details.

Even sillier was the third Cap story in #8, "The Mystery of the Black Witch". Set in Hagmoor castles (castles and mansions seemed to be the most popular settings for these early Cap tales), the story revolves around the efforts of young Karin Lee to spend three nights alone in Hagmoor castle, a provision of a will left by her late uncle Jonathan. Should she succeed, Karin inherits the estate; should she fail, the property goes to auction. Her attorney, Feritt (a name to reckon with) advises Cap and Bucky that the place is reputed to be haunted by "a ghost known as the Black Witch!".

Sure enough, we do meet a hideous-looking hag who looks as though she just dropped by from the Salem, Massachusetts witch trials of the seventeenth century. The presence of Cap and Bucky keeps her away for the first night of Karin's stay, but the second night the witch unleashes a horde of "gargoyles and snarling hobgoblins... unholy horrors" upon Karin, who for some reason appears to be sleeping on a couch. When Cap and Bucky attack the creatures, they dissolve into thin air. A suit of armor which rushes them is clobbered into pieces, only to reveal no one within. Cackling, the witch flies overhead on her broomstick.

The third night starts off with a bang, as the witch tosses Bucky into a river while offering to tell his fortune. (Well, no one ever accused Bucky of being very bright.) Cap saves him before he can go over the falls, and notices the taste of oil in the water. Cap then allows himself to get hit over the head by one of the witch's henchmen, assuring him of landing in the castle's torture chamber. Cap is saved by the appearance of a horde of ghostly goblins, who scare away the fake ghosts who are torturing him.

It turns out that Bucky has discovered the Black Witch's movie projector—conveniently labeled "movie ghost images"—along with the dials of her machines that created the other special effects, labeled "dummy monster dial" and "moving armor dial". (I guess the manufacturer didn't want anyone to mix up the dials and misuse them.) And who do you think the dreaded Black Witch turns out to be? None other than the lawyer, Feritt —none other, because there *is* no other character in the story except Karin Lee. Usually, there are three or four characters who *could* be the bad guy; someone (Stan Lee?) was asleep at the switch on this one, which still leaves one big question unanswered: how the heck did the Black Witch *fly* on a broomstick? I didn't see any "flying broomstick" dial on her machine. One good thing, anyway: the Witch wasn't working for Hitler. Feritt just wanted the land for its oil rights.

But how do these Feritts *build* these special effects machines in the first place?

A legitimate horror story finally takes place in issue #9 (December 1941). Although the first two Cap stories in the issue are typical "teases" —"The White Death" is yet another "cloaked figure trying to inherit estate by killing off other family members" story, while "The Man Who Could Not Die" is about a con who the electric chair seemingly can't kill (he's bribed the guards not to give him a full load of juice)—the third story is the McCoy. "The Case of the Black Talon" is the tale of Pascal Horta (where did Timely come up with these names?!), a painter who enjoys capturing the moment of death for his subject matter. Since there are few volunteers for this sort of sitting, Horta simply drafts his models and watches them die. Then he exhibits his paintings in galleries! (A nice touch; everyone can use some constructive criticism.) And the hand that holds the brush as he paints is... black.

Not just painted black, or gloved black. Black as in *African*. It seems Horta lost a hand in an accident, and a helpful doctor grafted on the hand of "an African killer" who was about to die on the electric chair. Soon the hand began to take control of Horta. "Corpuscles from the dead killer's hand invaded my bloodstream," the mad painter explains, "seizing control of my brain." Hence the name, the Black Talon.

If that explanation is meant to be scientific, then this story could be classified as another example of "naturalism"—but of course the idea is a direct lift from the 1935 Peter Lorre movie *Mad Love*, in which a killer's hands are grafted onto a pianist, who slowly becomes possessed by them and turns homicidal. But Lorre's hands didn't come from an African! Anyway, the Black Talon nearly manages to kill Cap and Bucky—he strangles them in order to paint their death expressions—and at story's end he simply escapes, a rare occurence in a Cap tale. But the reason is given in the last panel: the Black Talon is needed for an appearance in *Young Allies #2*, now on sale. (The story is a disappointment; the Talon now is simply a Nazi stooge trying to take over America, and no painting of any kind is ever mentioned.)

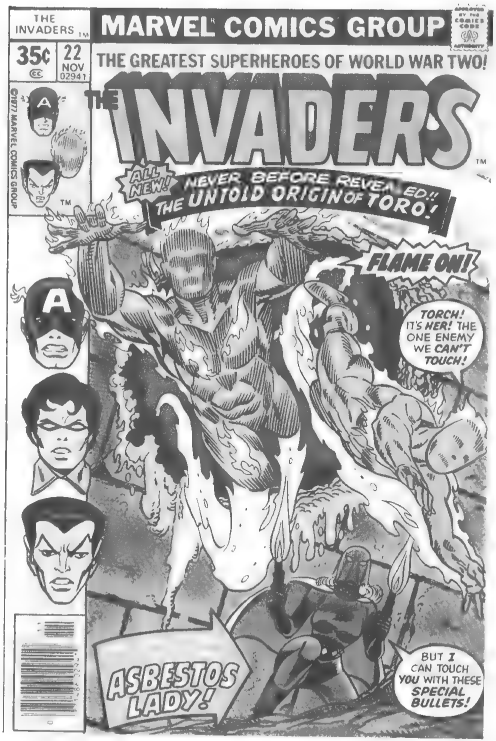
Cap #10 (January 1942) returns us to the tried-and-true formula of events that *appear* supernatural but end up having a logical explanation. In "Hotel of Horror", it appears that a coven of male witches is running an out-of-town hotel that Cap and Bucky visit while on a fund-raising drive, but it turns out that the cloaked figures are really (yawn) fifth columnists who are trying to sabotage America by killing Cap. "The Phantom Hound of Cardiff Manor" looks a bit more promising, but of course the explanation is the same as in its source, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*—"the dog that walks like a man" and that glows in the dark turns out to be a hound painted with a luminescent mixture before being turned out on the moors. (These are American moors, of course.) Actually, the killing that goes on—and in these early Cap tales, plenty of killing usually does—is performed by the dog's owner, Mr. Murdock, who dresses in a dog suit and kills the victims with his costume's claws. An original touch there. Unfortunately for the real dog, it tries to bite Cap and Cap breaks its neck. Booooo! (See *S.H.I.E.L.D. #3*, 1968, for Jim Steranko's homage to this story.)

Thus ended the Simon and Kirby run on *Captain America*, as the team shifted over to DC where they were put to work creating an army of boy teams, never to dip into the horror well of ideas again. Cap as a magazine continued on with the its popularity not lessened in the least, until the war's ending took away his momentum. But the horror elements did continue for a time. The cover of #17 has Cap trying to save Bucky from an early interment in a graveyard, while #25 contains the very odd story, "The Murdering Mummy and the Laughing Sphinx," which actually seems to have some honest-to-gosh Egyptian god named "Modebl the Demon" running around draining bodies of blood. His "courtier", Karr, does most of the killing, and turns out to be one Professor Jameson who turns into an eight-foot-tall mummy because of "lycanthropy". On top of all this, Cap drinks some concentrated opium, the agent for Jameson's transformations. None of this makes the least bit of sense; I think the point had something to do with killing all of the world's elected officials, so that chaos would reign and Modebl could take over. Anyway, it's a pretty demented yarn. Also in this issue is the first part of the famous two-part serial, "The Princess of the Atom", in which Cap actually has a science-fiction adventure, just like the old pulp story of the same name. But that's the subject for another article.

As a footnote, it should be mentioned that Cap turned one last time to a horror motif after several years of straight crime stories. Issue #74 was entitled *Captain America's Weird Tales* and featured the umpteenth appearance of the Red Skull. Issue #75 bore the same title, but didn't even feature Cap; it was just a bunch of horror stories of the sort EC was already beginning to make industry waves with. The time was February 1950, and the days of the superheroes were numbered. The experiment ended with that issue, and #76 offered more or less typical Cap crime stories. A few months later the magazine was cancelled, one more victim of the superhero slump that, ironically, horror comics were responsible for. Cap was reborn briefly in 1954, now strictly as a crime 'n' commies fighter. His '60s rebirth cast him once more as a straight superhero, never to face the likes of the Black Talon or the Hunchback of Hollywood again.

REVISITING THE GOLDEN AGE

Marvel resurrected Captain America and the Sub-Mariner in the Sixties. In the Seventies The Human Torch (the android) and Toro joined the roster of Golden Age heroes brought back into action. These four heroes were reteamed in The Invaders.


THE INVADERS
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THE GREATEST SUPERHEROES OF WORLD WAR TWO!
THE INVADERS
ALL NEW!! NEVER BEFORE REVEALED!! THE UNTOLD ORIGIN OF TORO!
FLAME ON!
TORCH! IT'S HER! THE ONE ENEMY WE CAN'T TOUCH!
BUT I CAN TOUCH YOU WITH THESE SPECIAL BULLETS!
ASBESTOS LADY!

"EVEN THE PUBLIC KNOWS, OF COURSE, THE STORY OF HOW I DISCOVERED TORO, NEARLY TWO YEARS AGO...!!!
"HE WAS A 'FIRE-EATING BOY' WITH A CIRCUS SIDE SHOW, WHEN HE HIMSELF ACCIDENTALLY BURST INTO FLAME--
-- JUST AS I WAS PASSING BY OVERHEAD!
HUMAN TORCH # 1, MAY, 1939 ©1967 TIMELY, MASTER PIECES

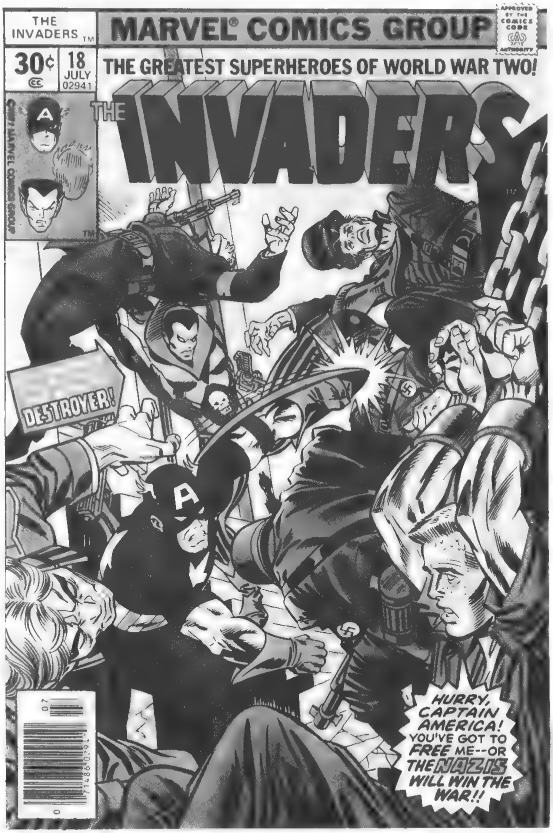
It wasn't until the 1970s resurrection of The Human Torch and Toro that comic book audiences were informed of Toro's origin.

"NATURALLY, MY PAL, STRONG-ARM FLAME AT ONCE SUB-DUED HIS OWN...
HEY! YOU'RE THE -- HUMAN TORCH!
WH-WHAT HAPPENED?
GUILTY AS CHARGED, SON.
TORO! I JUST HEARD! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
NOT EVEN A SUNBURN, POPS! -- IS IT THANKS FOR ASKING?
POPS, THIS IS THE FAMOUS HUMAN TORCH!
IT'S A PLEASURE, POPS
POPS OWNS THIS FLEA TROUPE "TORCH"
HOWDY.

DAD, DON'T DO THIS UNLESS YOU MIGHT TO -- BUT DO YOU THINK YOU CAN TURN YOUR FLAME ON AND OFF AT WILL?
I -- I DON'T KNOW, BUT I'LL --
WOW! IT WORKS!
GREAT! NOW TRY TO LEAP UP!
"AND SO HE DID, FINDING INSTANTLY THAT HE COULD FLY NOW, AS I COULD.
I'LL BE DOG! YOU'RE LIKE A HIGH-BORN COLT WITH WORKS, LEGS -- BUT YOU'LL LEARN!
THOUGH NOT YET FOR MORE THAN A FEW SECONDS.
I'M FALLING!

"BEFORE AS ALONE AS ONLY THE GODS KNOW ANYBODY CAN BE IN A WORLD OF HUMANS.
LIBERTY SHIPYARD
"BUT, FROM THEN ON, I WAS ALONE AS LONGER -- FIGHTING ALONGSIDE A BOY WHO IN-SISTED ON CALLING ME 'HAPPY'--
"--AS IF THAT COULD TURN ME INTO THE ANTHEM HE HAD HARDLY KNOWN.

"--JUST AS A CIRCUS TRAIN SCREECHED TO A HALT ON THE CARNOSITE TRACK!"
A HUSBAND-AND-WIFE FIRE-EATING TEAM RUSHED FROM THEIR TRAIN, IN TIME TO SEE YOUNG TERRO RUSHING BACK TOWARD THE BURNING WRECKAGE...
LOOK! A KID--WE'VE GOT TO STOP HIM ELLIE!
M-MOMMY! DAD!
"THE BOY RAN INTO THE FLAMES, ONLY TO BE DRIVEN BACK A MOMENT LATER, MIRACULOUSLY UNHARMED...
MOMMY--DADDY--I'M COMING!"
PLUCKY KID--HE'S FAINTED!
THE POOR CHILD! IF ONLY WE COULD DO SOMETHING FOR HIM--
MAYBE WE CAN! LOOK!
WHAT IS IT, TOM?
THERE--IN HIS HAND--!
HE'S HOLDING A PIECE OF TROLLEY STRUT FROM THE WRECKAGE!
AND HIS HAND ISN'T BURNED!
WHAT CAN IT MEAN, TOM?
I DON'T KNOW--BUT IT LOOKS LIKE WE'VE FOUND THE GREATEST ATTRACTION IN THE WORLD!
WAIT--HE'S WAKING UP!
MOMMY--DAD--?
"QUICKLY SOOTHING THE BOY AS BEST THEY COULD THE YOUNG COUPLE WERE BESET WITH CURIOSITY..
YOU RAN RIGHT INTO THE FIRE! WEREN'T YOU AFRAID?
SEE--NO FIRE HAS HURT ME!
I USED TO PULL MY PLAYMATES OUT OF THE FIRE FOR THE GANG.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18 JULY 02941
THE GREATEST SUPERHEROES OF WORLD WAR TWO!
THE INVADERS
CAPT. MARVEL COMICS GROUP
DE-STROYER!
HURRY, CAPTAIN AMERICA! YOU'VE GOT TO FREE ME--OR THE NAZIS WILL WIN THE WAR!!

THE HUMOR OF TIMELY

In the Golden Age of Comics it wasn't all superheroes. Timely carried a number of humorous titles by such greats as Basil Wolverton, Al Jaffe and Frank Pretsch.

NY! NY! SOME GUY IS FALLING OUT OF THE SKY!
I'VE CAUGHT MANY A HIGH FLY, BUT THIS TAKES THE PIE!
SIP!
YOU SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL, THAT GROUND IS HARD, PARD
MEANWHILE
HELP! HOW IN HIGH WATER DO I GET THE HANG OF HERDING THIS HILL HOPPER?
SWISH!
LOOK OUT! THE LOUT WHO TOSSED ME OUT IS COMING DOWN ON HIS SNOUT!
MMM! THE ARMY CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE THAT SHIP!
ARROOWWR!
SO I'LL GRAB IT!
GRRING AWRING!
AH ... IT'S YOU!
WHAT THE —? HOW COME YOU LITTLE BUM?
GET OFF THAT WING YOU LOUSY THING!
MMM! THAT'S THE LAST I'LL SEE OF HUM!
YES! THERE'S A HOLE IN THE BOTTOM
CLUNK
SPLUNK!

SQUAT CAR SQUAD
By A. JAY
PLEASE BOYS.....PLEASE!! YOU CAN'T LET ME DOWN!! THIS IS HOW I MAKE MY LIVING!! I'VE GOT TO LIVE!!
YOU REALLY THINK SO??
LOOK, FELLAS—I'LL TELL YOU WHAT I'LL DO!! I'LL WRITE PEACEFUL STORIES FROM NOW ON..... NO MORE MURDERERS AND THIEVES ..... JUST NICE PEACEFUL STORIES!!
HELLO BOYS!! WHAT A GORGEOUS DAY WE'LL TA TA HAVE A DATE WITH THE BIRDS THE BEES AND FLOWERS
FOR EXAMPLE HERE COMES TYRONE THE TERRIBLE.... LOOK AT HIM!!
SEE? WHAT DID I TELL YOU?
HOLY SMOKE! WAS THAT TYRONE THE TERRIBLE— THE SCREWBALL THAT THE WHOLE COUNTRY FEARED?
SURE! AND NOW LOOK AT HIM.....HE'S AS GENTLE AS A LAMB!! SEE! THAT'S WHAT I MEAN WHEN I SAY I'LL WRITE EVERY STORY ABOUT NICE PEACEFUL CHARACTERS!!
HEY!
BOSS!
THE EDITOR!!
YEAH—IT'S ME! SO YOU GIVE'NS THOUGHT YOU'D GET AWAY WITHOUT DOING ANY WORK, EH? WELL, YOU THOUGHT WRONG—SEE!! YOU'LL STARVE FIRST!

TESSIE the TYPIST
HOW ABOUT SEEIN' A SHOW WITH ME TONIGHT, TES'?
SORRY, I HAVE ANOTHER DATE!
AWWW!
MAYBE I'M TOO HARD ON SKIDSY, I DO LIKE HIM
HE FEELS BAD WHEN I DON'T GO OUT WITH HIM!
WHY SHOULD I BREAK HIS HEART?
I WILL GO WITH HIM! I'LL TELL HIM NOW!
HE'S IN HERE!
SKIDSY I--- OH!
OK, JUNE LET'S GO!
I'M READY TO GO TO THE SHOW NOW, SKIDSY!
BOO HOO-- I'M THRU WITH MEN! FOREVER N'EVER. BOO HOO!

The LI'L PROFESSOR and RUDY THE ROBOT
THE PROFESSOR FACES TROUBLE AS OTHER FORCES PLOT TO ABDUCT HIS LATEST AND MOST SUCCESSFUL INVENTION, RUDY THE ROBOT—WILL THEY SUCCEED? RIGHT NOW THE PROFESSOR'S NEPHEW LISTENS AS "WELL, LET'S SEE"
• BY • FRANK PRETACH
Y'SEE, OSWALD, THIS INSTRUMENT STRAPPED AROUND MY WAIST HAS A KEYBOARD JUST LIKE A TYPEWRITER WHICH CONTROLS THE ROBOT—SUPPOSE I WANT A BOOK—I PUSH THE LETTER "B"—I CONCENTRATE ON THE WORD "BOOK" AND RUDY'S MIND IS SO SENSITIVE IT CATCHES MY THOUGHT WAVES—UNDERSTAND?
NOPE—BUT HE'S GETTIN' THE BOOK!
YOU BETCHA—NOW WILL YOU LET ME AN' RUDY START PAINTIN' THIS DINING ROOM?
DID I JUST HEAR YOU SAY YOU AND THAT OVER-SIZED TIN CAN ARE GOING TO PAINT THIS ROOM?
THAT'S RIGHT—WHY HIRE A PAINTER WHEN ME AND RUDY ARE AROUND?
BECAUSE I DON'T TRUST EITHER OF—
EEEEK!
LOOKOUT DEAR! THE ROBOT'S OUT OF CONTROL!!
?!
YOU CAN COME OUT NOW—HE'S CALMED DOWN! THE BLITZ IS OVER!
YEAH!—MECHANIZED WARFARE, HA! HA
OOOOH! THAT MONSTER! ARE YOU SURE HE WAS REALLY OUT OF CONTROL?
SURE HE WAS—HE'S NOT QUITE PERFECTED IN THAT RESPECT!
HEH, HEE!

The REBOUNDING GRENADE STRIKES THE ARSENAL FILLED WITH MUNITIONS AND HIDING NAZIS --- WHO VANISH IN AN EARTH-SHAKING BLAST THAT TEARS AWAY HALF OF THE CASTLE ...
MY FOLLOWERS -- WIPED OUT BY MY OWN HAND ---
YOU HAVE WON, CAPTAIN AMERICA! I ONLY ASK NOT TO BE TORTURED BEFORE YOU KILL ME
I'D BE EXPECTED TO KILL A HELPLESS WOMAN IF I WERE A NAZI -- BUT I'M NOT!
THANK HEAVEN!
I'M GOING TO LET YOU RETURN TO GERMANY BECAUSE RATS OF YOUR KIND DON'T DESERVE TO BE IN A FREE LAND -- EVEN IN PRISON! --- AND YOU CAN TELL THAT AUSTRIAN PAPER-HANGER THIS ---
--- TELL HIM THAT OUR FREEDOM HAS BEEN THREATENED BEFORE AND WE'RE STILL AROUND TO TACKLE ANYONE WHO THINKS HE CAN TAKE IT FROM US NOW! HITLER AND HIS LOOT-CRAZED BARBARIANS WILL FIND THE FARMER OF LEXINGTON AND CONCORD STILL VERY MUCH ALIVE IN THE SPIRIT OF EVERY MODERN AMERICAN!

"Captain America was created for a time that needed noble figures."

—Jack Kirby

Heroes and Humor—
During the Golden Age, Timely produced a variety of comics ranging from the stirring exploits of Captain America to the humorous misadventures of characters created by the likes of Al Jaffee and Basil Wolverton.